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# WHIST

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# WHIST,

AND

# SHORT WHIST.

BY

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# ADVICE

TO THE

# YOUNG WHIST-PLAYER;

CONTAINING MOST OF THE

## MAXIMS OF THE OLD SCHOOL,

WITH THE

AUTHOR'S OBSERVATIONS ON THOSE HE THINKS ERRONEOUS:

ALSO

SEVERAL NEW ONES,

EXEMPLIFIED BY APPOSITE CASES;

AND

A METHOD OF ACQUIRING A KNOWLEDGE OF THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THEY ARE GROUNDED, POINTED OUT TO THE INEXPERIENCED PLAYER.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

## OBSERVATIONS ON SHORT WHIST.

BY T. MATHEWS, ESQ.

# TO THE READER.

It is a fact of general notoriety that, notwithstanding the numerous theories published, and the almost universal practice of a science, where profit and amusement may be combined, a *capital* whist-player is scarcely *ever*, and even what may be termed a *good* one but rarely, met with.

There is, indeed, in almost every provincial town, some 'squire, lawyer, or parson, who, you are told, plays an *excellent game of whist;* but a judge always finds him ignorant of what may be termed the alphabet; and, at best, possessed of a good memory, and capable, perhaps, of playing his own cards tolerably. The reason of this will appear obvious to those who reflect that, in all other arts and sciences, no man commences but by making himself master of the *first rudiments;* but the whist-player, in general, sits down

to lose, perhaps, considerable sums of money, without any further preparation than the having got a few *general* maxims by rote, which, from want of comprehending, he applies *universally*, and is, consequently, much oftener wrong than right in their application.

When the beginner reads, that with two or more of a sequence to his partner's lead, (as king and queen,) he should put on the lowest, he *does so*, or *not*, generally, without thinking it *material;* but after he is made to comprehend that his queen's passing demonstrates to his partner that the king cannot be in his left-hand adversary's hand, or the knave in his, and the consequent advantages to him in playing his suit, (whereas, if he puts on the *king*, it leaves him in ignorance as to the *queen* and *knave*,) he will never after err in those cases, and will also know how to profit by similar correctness in his future partners.

To beginners I wish to inculcate the absolute necessity that they should proceed gradually; and, before they sit down to play at all, make themselves masters of the *different leads, modes of playing sequences*, and some few of the most simple rules. When they feel within themselves that they have acquired some insight into the *theory*, let them begin to reduce it to practice in the best set of players they can meet with.

Beginning to play with bunglers, will not only prevent *present* improvement, but, as experience shows, when once they have acquired erroneous ideas, they will find it next to impossible to eradicate them in *future*.

By these means they will gradually acquire a knowledge of the more intricate combinations of the game, and comprehend *when* and *why* the general maxims are to be *adhered to* or *violated:* without which I cannot too often repeat, they more frequently puzzle than inform the player.

Though in many instances I have deviated from the common maxims, yet I am not vain enough to think I shall add much to the knowledge of the experienced whist-player; but I am convinced that an attentive study of this little treatise, *in the mode described*, will enable the beginner to sit down without disadvantage, in a very short time, with most sets he meets with. It is needless to tell those who play for considerable stakes, that it is *their* interest to acquire a knowledge of the game, at least sufficiently to defend their money; but it is, in my opinion, equally necessary for the players for *amusement*, as they call it; which, for the most part, consists, *to a bungler*, in being scolded and found fault with, from the moment he sits down to the breaking up of the party.

How far I have succeeded in my intention must be left to the judgment of the readers; to whom, with all due respect, these maxims are dedicated by

THE AUTHOR.

# INTRODUCTION.

The following definition of the game of whist is recommended to the attentive perusal of the reader, previous to his studying the maxims; as nothing will facilitate his comprehension of them so much as a clear idea of the ultimate end to which they all tend.

Whist is a game of *Calculation*, *Observation*, and *Position* or *Tenace*.

Calculation teaches you to plan your game, and lead originally to advantage; before a card is played, you suppose the dealer to have an honour and three other trumps; the others each an honour and two others. The least reflection will show, that as it is two to one that your partner has *not* a named card, to lead on the supposition he *has* it, is to play against calculation; whereas, the odds being in favour of his having *one* of *two* named cards, you are justified in playing accordingly. Calculation is also of use on other occasions, which the maxims will elucidate;

but after a few leads have taken place, it is nearly superseded by *observation*. Where the sets are *really good* players, before half the cards are played out, they are as well acquainted with the material ones remaining in each other's hands as if they had seen them. Where two regular players are matched against two irregular ones, it is nearly the same advantage as if they were permitted to see each other's cards, while the *latter* were denied the same privilege.

It is an axiom, that the nearer your play approaches to what is called the *dumb man* the better.

These may be called the foundation of the game, and are so merely mechanical, that any one possessed of a tolerable memory may attain them.

After which comes the more difficult science of *position*, or the art of using the two former to advantage; without which, it is self-evident, they are of no use. Attentive study and practice will, in some degree, insure success; but genius must be added before the whole finesse of the game can be acquired: however,

*Est quiddam prodire tenus, si non datur ultra.*

## DIRECTIONS AND MAXIMS FOR BEGINNERS.

1. Study all written maxims with the cards placed before you, in the situations mentioned. Abstract directions puzzle much oftener than they assist the beginner.

2. Keep in your mind that general maxims presuppose the game and hand, at their commencement, and that material changes in them frequently require that a different mode of play should be adopted.

3. Do not attempt to practice till you have acquired a competent knowledge of the theory, and avoid as much as possible, at first, sitting down with bad players. It is more difficult to eradicate erroneous, than to acquire just, ideas.

4. Never lead a card without a reason, though a wrong one; it is better than accustoming yourself to play at random.

5. Do not at first puzzle yourself with many cal-

culations. Those you will find hereafter mentioned are sufficient even for a proficient.

6. Do not accustom yourself to judge by consequences. *Bad* play sometimes succeeds when *good* would not. When you see an acknowledged judge of the game play in a manner you do not comprehend, get him to explain his reasons, and, while fresh on your memory, place the same cards before you; when once you can comprehend the case, you will be able to adapt it to similar situations.

7. Before you play a card, sort your hand carefully, look at the trump card, and consider the score of the game, the strength of your own hand, and form your plan on the *probable situation* of the cards; subject, however, to be changed should anything fall to indicate a different one; after which, never look at your hand, till you are to play. Without attending to the board, no maxims or practice can even make a tolerable whist-player.

8. Observe silently and attentively the different systems of those with whom you commonly play; few but have their favourite one, the knowledge of which will give you a constant advantage; *one* leads by preference from an *ace*, another never but through necessity. [This will often direct you in putting on the king second.] The players of the *old school* never

lead from a single card without six trumps; many do so from *weakness:* some have a trick of throwing down high cards to the adversary's lead, and then, by way of deception, affect to consider, although they have no alternative. Observation will enable you to counteract this, and turn it to your own profit.

9. The best leads are from sequences of three cards or more. If you have none, lead from your most numerous suit; if strong in trumps, lead rather from one headed by a king than a queen; but with three or four small trumps, I should prefer leading from a single card to a long weak suit.

N. B.—This is contrary to the usual practice, especially of the players of the Old School.

10. The more plainly you demonstrate your hand to your partner the better. Be particularly cautious not to deceive him in *his* or *your own* leads, or when he is likely to have the lead—a concealed game may now and then succeed in the suits of your adversaries; but this should not be attempted before you have made a considerable proficiency; and then but seldom, as its frequency would destroy the effect.

11. At the commencement of a game, if *you* have a good hand, or if your adversaries are considerably advanced in the score, play a bold game; if otherwise, a more cautious one.

12. Be as careful of what you throw away as what you *lead;* it is often of bad consequence to put down a tray with a deuce in your hand.—Suppose your partner leads the four, your right-hand adversary the five, and you put down the tray, it ought to be to a *certainty*, that you ruff it next time; but if he find the *deuce* in your hand, and you frequently deceive him by throwing down superior cards, it will destroy his confidence, and prevent his playing his game on similar occasions. I would wish to inculcate these minor qualifications of whist-playing to the beginners, because they are attainable by every body; and when once the great advantage of this kind of correctness is seen, the *worst* player would practise it as constantly as the best—attention being all that is necessary.

13. Do not lead trumps merely because an honour is turned up on your left, or be deterred from it, if on your right-hand.—*Either* is proper, if the circumstances of your hand require trumps to be led; but *neither* otherwise.

14. Finesses are generally right in *trumps*, or (if *strong* in *them*) in other suits; otherwise they are not to be risked but with caution.

15. Never ruff an uncertain card, if *strong*, or omit doing so if *weak* in trumps; this is one of the few

universal maxims, and cannot be too closely adhered to, even did you *know* the best of the suit was in your partner's hand: it has the double advantage of making a useless trump and letting your partner into the state of your hand, who will play accordingly.

16. Keep the command of your adversary's suit as long as you can with safety; but never that of your partner.

17. Do not ruff a thirteenth card second lead, if *strong*, but always if *weak* in trumps.

18. Always force the *strong*, seldom the *weak*, never the *two;* otherwise you play your adversaries' game, and give the *one* an opportunity to make his small trumps, while the *other* throws away his losing cards. It is a very *general* as well as a fatal error; but the extent of it is seldom comprehended by unskilful players, who, seeing the good effect of *judicious forces*, practise them INJUDICIOUSLY, to their almost constant disadvantage. The following effect of a force is too obvious not to be instantly comprehended. I have only to tell the student, that the same principle operates through the fifty-two cards, however various their combinations; and that a steady consideration of it is one of the first necessary steps towards an insight into the game.

*A* has a seizième-major in trumps, a quart-major in

the second, and a tierce-major in the third suit.—*B*, his adversary, has six small trumps, and the entire command of the fourth suit; in this case it is obvious that *one force* on *A* gains the odd trick for *B*, who without it loses a slam. Though so great an effect may seldom be produced, still there is scarcely a rubber where the truth of the maxim is not experimentally proved.

19. When, with a very strong suit, you lead trumps, in hope your partner may command them, show your suit first. If you have a strength in trumps in *your* hand, play them originally.

20. With the ace and three other trumps, it is seldom right to win the first and second lead in that suit, if made by your adversaries, unless your partner ruffs some other.

21. With a strong hand in trumps, particularly if you have a long suit, avoid ruffing your right-hand adversary as much as possible. As this is a maxim *less understood*, *less practised*, and *more indispensably necessary*, than almost any other, I will endeavor to explain it to beginners as clearly as I am capable of doing:—Cards being nearly equal, the point to which all the manœuvres of good whist-players tend, is to establish a long suit, and to preserve the last trump, to bring it into play, and to frustrate the same play of their adversaries. With an honour (or even a ten)

and three other trumps, by well managing them, you have a right to expect success. In this case do not over-trump your right-hand adversary early in the hand; but throw away a losing card, by which, there remaining but twelve trumps, your own hand is strengthened, and your partner has the tenace, in whatever suit is led; whereas, had you over-ruffed you would have given up the whole game, to *secure one* trick. But there are reasons for breaking this rule:—1st, if your left-hand adversary has shown a decided great hand in trumps, (in which case make your tricks while you can;) or 2d, if your partner *decicedly means* to force you;—to understand if this be the case, you are to observe if your partner plays the winning or losing card of the suit you have refused. If the *former*, it is by no means clear he *means* to force you, and you play *your own game.* If the *latter*, you are to suppose *him strong* in *trumps*, and depend on *this*, to protect *your* long suit; a due reflection on this will convince you of the value of that maxim, which enjoins you never to play a strong game with a weak hand, or *vice versâ.* A few deviations from *this* effectually destroy *that confidence* necessary between partners, and introduce a confusion and consequences that cannot be too carefully avoided or too strenuously deprecated.

22. If the circumstances of your hand require *two certain* leads in trumps, play off your *ace*, let your other trumps be what they may.

23. It is a general maxim not to force your partner, unless strong in trumps yourself. There are, however, many exceptions to this rule: as,

1st. If your partner has led from a single card.

2d. If it saves or wins a particular point.

3d. If great strength in trumps is declared against you.

4th. If you have a probability of a *saw*.

5th. If your partner has been forced and did not trump out.

6th. It is often right in playing for an odd trick.

24. It is difficult to judge when to lead trumps. The following situations will assist the beginner to *reason*, and in general direct him *properly*.

1st. With *six* trumps, on supposition your partner has a strong suit.

2d. If strong in other suits, though weak in trumps yourself.

3d. If your adversaries are playing from weak suits.

4th. If your adversaries are at the point of eight, and *you* have no honour, or probability of making a trump by a ruff.

25. It is easy soon to discover the different strengths of *good* players, but more difficult with *bad* ones. When your adversary refuses to trump, and throws away a small card, you conclude his hand consists of a *strong* suit in *trumps*, with one *strong* and another *weaker* suit. If he throws an honour, you *know* he has *two* suits only, *one* of which is trumps. In the latter case win tricks when you can. Avoid leading trumps, or to his suit; force *him*, and give your partner an opportunity to trump if possible. This maxim cannot be too maturely considered, as this is a fault which is constantly committed by bad players, and is amongst those most fatal in their consequences. The moment an adversary refuses to ruff, though a winning card, *they*, in violation of common sense, trump out, and not unfrequently give away five or six tricks, which a judicious force would have prevented.

26. If you are strong in trumps, and have the ace, king, and two more of your right-hand adversary's lead, there are two ways to play; either to pass it the first time, or else to put on the ace, and play the suit on to force your partner. If weak in trumps, put on the ace, but do not continue the suit.

27. If you win your partner's lead with the queen, unless in trumps, do not return it; it is evident the

ace or king lies behind him, and you give the tenace to the adversary.

23. To lead from only three cards, unless in sequence, is bad play, and only proper when you have reason to think it is your partner's suit; in which case play off the highest, though the king or queen.

N. B.—This is contrary to the general practice, but undoubtedly right.

29. The first object should be to save the game, if it appears in probable danger; the next to *win* it, if you have a reasonable hope of success, by any mode of play, though hazardous. If neither of these is the question, you should play to the *points* or score of the game. In other words, you should not give up the *certainty* of the *odd trick*, or scoring *five* or *eight*, for the equal chance of *two*, *six*, or *nine;* whereas you should risk an equal finesse that will prevent your adversaries from these scores by its success.

30. It is generally right to return your partner's lead in trumps unless he leads an *equivocal* card, such as a nine or ten. These are called *equivocal*, because they are led with propriety, both from strong and weak suits.—With a quart or a king—or nine, ten, knave, and king of a suit, you lead *nine*, as you do when it is the best of two or three of a suit.

31. With only four trumps, do not lead one, unless your strong suit is established, except that with a tierce-major and another trump, and a sequence to the king of three more, it is good play to lead trumps twice, and then the knave of your suit, and continue till the ace is out.

32. If you remain with the best trump, and *one* of your adversaries has three or more, do not play out, as it may stop the suit of your other adversary. If they *both* have trumps, and your partner *none*, it is right to take out two for one.

33. If strong in trumps, with the commanding card of the adversaries' suit, and small ones, force your partner, if he has none of that suit, with the small ones, and keeping the commanding card till the last.

34. If your partner leads the ace and queen of a suit, of which you have the king and two others, win his queen that you may not stop his suit.

35. If your right-hand adversary wins, and returns his partner's lead, should you have the best and a small one, play the latter. If your partner has the third best he will probably make it. If your adversary is a bad player, I would not advise this, as they *never* finesse when they *ought* to do it.

N. B.—If weak in trumps, you should not venture this in other suits.

36. If your right-hand adversary calls, and your *partner* leads *through him*, with *ace* or *king*, the *nine* and a small one, you should finesse the nine.

37. If your partner calls before his turn, he means you should play a trump. Take every opportunity to show your partner that you can command the trumps. In this case he will keep his own strong suit entire; whereas, if the strength of trumps is with the adversaries, his play would be to keep guard on their suits, and throw away from his own.

38. With ace, knave, and another trump, it is right to finesse the knave to your partner's lead; and if strong in *them* you should do the same in any suit. If he leads the ten of any suit, you pass it invariably with the ace and knave; unless one trick saves or wins any particular point.

39. It is better to lead from ace nine, than ace ten, as you are more likely to have a tenace in the latter suit, if led by your adversary.

40. If your partner, to *your* winning card, throws away the *best* card of any suit, it shows he wishes you to know he commands it; if the *second best*, it is to tell you he has no more of that suit.

41. If very strong in trumps, it is always right to inform your partner of it as soon as possible. If fourth player, you are to win a small trump, and if you

have a sequence of three or more, win it with the highest, and play the lowest afterwards.

42. If strong in trumps, do not ruff the second best of any suit your partner leads, but throw away a losing card, unless you have an established *saw*.

43. If ten cards are played out, and there remains one entire suit, and your partner leads, if you have a king, ten, and another, and six tricks, you have a certainty to make the odd one, *if you play right*, let the cards lie how they will; should your right-hand adversary put on an honour, you must *win* it; if not, put on the ten; with *five* tricks, put on the king.

44. Many good players, in playing tierce majors, begin with the king and queen. This is often productive of mischief; as, when played at other times from king and queen only, the ace is kept up, and while each thinks his partner has it and has played accordingly, it unexpectedly appears from the adversary, and disappoints their whole plan.

45. If the fourth player wins his adversary's lead, it is better to return it than open a new suit, unless strong enough in it to support his partner.

46. With ace, knave, and another, do not win the king led by your left-hand adversary. You either force him to exchange his lead, or give you tenace in his own suit.

47. With ace, queen, etc., of a suit, of which your right-hand adversary leads the knave, put on the ace invariably. No good player with king, knave, and ten, will begin with the knave; of course, it is finessing against yourself, to put on the queen, and as the king is certainly behind you, you give away at least the lead, without any possible advantage.

48. With only three of a suit, put an honour on an honour; with four or more, you should not do it—except the *ace* should not be put on the *knave*.

49. With king, and *one more*, good players sometimes put it on a second, sometimes not; if turned up it should invariably be put on, and generally in trumps. But queen or knave should never be played, unless a superior honour is turned up on the right.

50. In playing for an odd trick, you play a closer game than at other scores. You lead from single cards and force your partner, when at another time you would not be justified. It is seldom in this case proper to lead trumps; and few finesses are justifiable. It is a nice part of the game, and experience, with attention, will alone teach it with effect.

51. If the trumps remain divided between you and your partner, and you have no winning card yourself, it is good play to lead a small trump, to put in his hand to play off any that he may have, to give you an opportunity to throw away your losing cards.

*A* remains with two or more trumps, and two losing cards; his partner, with a better trump, and two winning cards. It is evident, if he plays off a losing card, he will take merely his own trumps, but if he plays an inferior trump, and puts it into his partner's lead, he will play off his winning cards, and give *A* an opportunity to throw away his losing ones.

N. B.—This continually occurs, and it is necessary to be comprehended.

52. When your partner leads, win with the lowest of a sequence, to demonstrate your strength in *his* suit; but it is often right to win your *adversary's* lead with the highest, to keep him in ignorance.

53. When your partner plays a thirteenth card, and most of the trumps are unplayed, he generally means you should put on a high trump to strengthen his own hand.

54. When you have but a moderate hand yourself, sacrifice it to your partner; he, if he be a good player, will act in the same manner.

55. With *three*, return the *highest;* with *four*, the *lowest* of your partner's lead. This awswers two purposes, by giving your partner an opportunity to finesse, and showing him you have but three at most in his suit.

56. With the ace, queen, and others of your right-hand adversary's lead, put on a small one, except he leads a knave, in which case put on the ace.

57. When at eight, with two honours, look at your adversary's score, and consider if there is a probability that they should save their lurch, or win the game, notwithstanding your partner holds a third honour; if not, you should not call, as it gives a decided advantage against you in playing for tricks.

58. Finessing in general is only meant against one card. There are, however, situations when much deeper are required; but theory alone can never enable the beginner to discover these. Supposing it necessary, you should make two out of the last three cards in a suit not yet played, your partner leads the nine, you have ace, ten, and a small one. *Query*, what are you to do? *Answer*, pass it, though the finesse is against *three;* for, if your partner *has* an honour in the suit, you make two tricks. If not, it is impossible by any mode of play whatever.

59. With king, queen, etc., of your right-hand adversary's lead put on one of them; with queen, knave, and another, the knave; with two or more small ones, the lowest.

60. The more critically you recollect the cards the better; at least you should remember the *trumps* and

the *commanding card* of each suit. It is possible to assist the memory by the mode of placing the cards remaining in your hands—viz. Place the trumps in the back part of your hand, your partner's lead the next, your adversary's next, and your own on the outside. It is also right to put thirteen cards in some known position.

61. It is highly necessary to be correct in leads. When a good player plays an eight and then a seven, I know he leads from a weak suit; the contrary when he plays the seven first; the same even with a tray or a deuce. This is what bad players always err in, as they never can see the difference.

62. If left with the last trump, and some winning cards, with one losing one, play this first, as your adversary on the left may finesse, and the second best in your partner's hand make the trick; which could not be kept till the last.

63. Should your partner refuse to trump a certain winning card, try to get the lead as soon as you can, and play out trumps immediately.

64. Good players never lead a nine or ten, but for one of these reasons:—

1st. From a sequence up to a king.

2d. From nine, ten, knave, and king.

3d. When the best of a weak suit not exceeding 3 in number.

If you have either *knave* or *king* in your *own* hand, you are certain it is for the latter reason, and that the whole strength of the suit is with your adversary, and play your game accordingly.

65. If your partner leads the *nine* or *ten*, and you have an honour, with only one more, put it on; if with two or more, do not; with the ace and small ones, win it invariably; for it is better that *he* should finesse in his own suit than *you*.

66. Unless you have a strong suit yourself, or reason to suppose your partner has one, do not trump out, unless you have six trumps.

67. There are situations where even good players differ: if a queen is laid on your right hand, and you have ace or king and two small ones, you should *certainly* win it; but having king or ace, ten, and a small one, *I* invariably pass it, and for the following reasons:—by passing it, if your partner has the ace or king, you clearly lie tenace, and the leader cannot possibly make a trick in the suit, which he must have done, had you even the first trick, as he would lay tenace over *your* partner: if your partner has the *knave* you lose a trick; but the odds are greatly against this.

68. It is seldom right to lead from a suit in which you have a tenace. With ace, queen, etc., of one

suit—king, knave, etc., of a second—and the third a weak one—the best play is to lead from the latter.

69. When it is evident the winning cards are betwixt *you* and your adversaries, play an obscure game; but as clear a one as possible, if your *partner* has a good hand.

70. It is equally advantageous to lead *up to* as *through* an *ace;* not so much so to a *king;* and disadvantageous to the *queen turned up.*

71. Avoid at first playing with those who instruct, or rather find fault, while the hand is playing. They are generally unqualified by ignorance, and judge from consequences; but if not, advice while playing does more harm than good, by confusing a beginner.

72. It is seldom right to refuse to ruff when your partner, if a *good player*, visibly intends you should do it. If a *bad one*, your *own* hand should direct you.

73. If you have ace, king, and two more trumps, and your partner leads them originally, insure three rounds in trumps; but if he leads (in consequence of your showing your strength) a nine, or any equivocal card, in that case pass it the first time; by which you have the lead after three rounds of trumps, a most material advantage.

74. There is often judgment required in taking

the penalties of a revoke. Before the score is advanced, if the party revoking has won nine tricks, the least consideration will show that the adversaries should take three of them, for if they add three to their own score, they still leave the odd trick to the former; but if the revoking party be at *eight*, it is better for the adversary to score three points, as the odd trick leaves the former at *nine*, which is in every respect a worse point than eight. On other occasions, it is only to calculate how the different scores will remain after each mode of taking the penalty; and it will be obvious which will be the most advantageous —never losing sight of the points of the game, i. e., scoring eight or five yourself, or preventing your adversary from doing so.

75. With ace, queen, and ten, of your right-hand adversary's lead, put out the ten.

76. When your left-hand adversary refuses to trump a *winning card*, for fear of being over-trumped by *your* partner, and throws away a losing card, if you have the commanding card of the suits he discards, play it before you continue the former.

77. When all the trumps are out, if you have the commanding card of your adversary's suit, you may play your own as if you had the thirteenth trump in your own hand.

78. If *A*, your right-hand adversary, leads a card, and *his* partner *B*, putting on the knave or queen, *yours* wins with the king—should *A* lead a small card of that suit again, if you have the *ten* put it on. It is probable, by doing this, you keep the commanding card in your partner's hand, and prevent the second best from making.

79. If weak in trumps, keep guard on your adversaries' suits. If *strong*, throw away from them, and discard as much as possible from your partner's strong suits, in either case.

80. Should your left-hand adversary lead the king, to have the finesse of the knave, and it comes to your lead, if you have queen and one more, it is evident the finesse will succeed. In this case, play the *small one* through *him*, which frequently will prevent him from making the finesse, though he has originally played for it.

81. If your partner shows a weak game, force him, whether or not you are otherwise entitled to do it.

82. When you are at the score of four or nine, and your adversaries, though *eight*, do not call, if *you* have no honour, it is evident your partner has two at least. It is equally so if you have *one*, that he has at least another. If both parties are at eight, and neither calls, each must have one.

A little reflection will enable the beginner to make a proper advantage of these data.

83. When your partner leads a card, of which you have the best and *third*, and your right-hand adversary puts on the fourth, the second only remaining—it is a commonly-received, but erroneous, opinion, that the chance of succeeding in the finesse is *equal;* but here calculation will show, that as the last player has one card more than his partner, it is that *proportion* in favour of his having it. With *three* cards, it will be three to two against making the finesse.

84. Moderate players have generally a decided aversion to part with the best trump, though single; thinking, that as they cannot lose it, and it can make but one trick, it is immaterial when it does so: this is a dangerous fault. When your adversary plays out his strong suit, ruff it immediately, before you give his partner an opportunity to throw off his losing cards. Do not, however, go into the contrary extreme, or trump with the best trump, with small ones in your hand, for fear of being over-trumped. This is a nice part of the game, and can be only understood by practice and attentive reasoning.

85. It frequently happens that your partner has an opportunity to show his strong suit, by renouncing to a lead. If you have a single card in this, play

it before you force him, let your strength in trumps be what it may; as it is the way to establish the *saw*, which is almost always advantageous; should the second player put on the ace to prevent it, still it is of great utility by establishing your partner's suit.

86. *A* has ace, knave, ten, and a small card of the suit led by his right-hand adversary.—*Query*, Which is he to play? *Answer*, in trumps, the *ten;* in other suits, the small ones; for this reason—in trumps, a good player, with king, queen, etc., leads the lowest; in other suits, the *king;* and in the latter case, of course, an honour must be behind you; and be it in *either* hand, you can do no good by putting on the ten; by keeping the three together you render it impossible for your adversary to make one trick in the suit.

87. It often happens that with only three cards remaining in his hand, the leader has the worst trump, and ace, queen, or some tenace of another suit. In this case he should lead the trump, to put it into his adversary's hand to play. By these means he preserves the tenace. This, though self-evident on proper consideration, is what none but good players ever think of.

88. Though it is certainly more regular to win your adversary's as well as partner's lead with the lowest of a sequence, still I recommend occasional de-

viations from that maxim; as it is of the greatest advantage to give your partner every information in *his*, or *your own*, so it is often necessary to deceive your adversaries in *their suits*. It will now and then deceive your partner also; but if done with judgment, it is, I think, oftener attended with good than bad effect.

There are also other situations, where it is highly necessary to deceive the adversary. *A*, last player, has a tierce-major and a small trump; a tierce-major with two others of a second suit; king, and a small one of a third; with queen or knave and a small one of the fourth: of which his adversary leads the *ace*. It is so very material for *A* to get the lead, before he is forced, that he should without hesitation throw down the queen, as the most likely method to induce his adversary to change his lead. But this mode of play should be reserved for material occasions, and not by its frequency give cause for its being suspected.

89. Beginners find it difficult to distinguish between original and forced leads. When a player changes his original suit, he commonly leads his strongest card of another, to give his partner the advantage of a finesse. In this case you are to play this, as if it was your *own* or *adversary's* lead—keep the commanding card, tenace, etc., and do not return it, as if it was an original lead.

90. There is nothing more necessary to be explained to the beginner, than what is usually denominated *underplay*, as it is a constant engine in the hands of the *experienced*, to use successfully against the *inexperienced* player. In other words, it is to return the lowest of your left-hand adversary's lead, though you have the highest in your hand, with a view of your partner's making the third best, if he has it, and still retaining the commanding card in your hand.

91. To explain this farther, suppose *A*, fourth player, has ace and king of his left-hand adversary's lead; to under-play, he wins the trick with the ace, and returns the small one, which will generally succeed, if the leader has not the *second* and third in his own hand. You will see by this, if you *lead* from a *king*, etc., and your right-hand adversary, after winning with a ten or knave, return it, you have no chance to make your *king*, but by putting it on.

92. The following is another situation to underplay: *A* remains with the first, third, and fourth cards of a suit of which he has reason to suppose his left-hand adversary has the *second guarded;* by playing the fourth, it is often passed, and *A* makes every trick in the suit.

N. B.—This sort of play is always right in trumps; but if weak in *them*, it is generally the best play

to make your certain tricks as fast as you can for if you have not *your share of them*, somebody must have *more* than their *own*, and, of consequence, be weak in some other suit, which probably is your strong one.

93. Keep the trump card as long as you can if *your* partner leads trumps; the contrary if your adversary leads them. In the former instance, supposing the eight turned up, and you have the nine, throw away the latter; in the last (though you have the seven or six) play the card you turned up.

94. When *your* partner is to lead, and you call before he plays, it is to direct him, if he has no honour, to play off the best trump he has.

95. Though, according to the strict laws of whist, all words and gestures are prohibited; yet, like all other laws not enforced by penalties, they are continually violated. There are, indeed, few players who do not discover, in some degree, the strength of their game, or their approbation or disapprobation of their partner's play, etc. As this is on one side often a material advantage to the party transgressing, so it is quite allowable for the adversaries to make use of it. Attentive and silent observation will frequently give an early insight into the game, and enable you to play your hand to more advantage than by adhering to more regular maxims.

96. Though tenace, or the advantage of position, cannot be reduced to a *certainty*, as at *piquet*, and that it is often necessary to relinquish it for more certain advantages, still no man can be a whist-player who does not fully understand it. The principle is *simple*, but the combinations are *various*. It is easily conceived that if *A* has ace, queen, and a small card of a suit, of which *B* has king, knave, and another; if *A* leads the small card, he remains tenace, and wins two tricks; whereas, if he plays the ace, he gives it up and makes but one. But if *B* is to lead, he has no tenace, and lead which card he will, he must make *one* trick, and can make no more. This easy instance, well considered, will enable the player, with some practice, to adapt it to more apparently intricate situations.

97. The following cases, which happen frequently, will further explain this: *A* is left with four cards and the lead, viz., the second and fourth trump, and the ace and a small card of a suit not played. Nine trumps being out, *B*, his left-hand adversary, has the first and third trump, king and a small one of the suit of which *A* leads the ace. *Query*, what card should *B* play? *Answer*, the *king;* by which he brings it to an equal chance whether he wins three tricks or two; but if he keeps the king he cannot possibly win three.

By placing the cards you will perceive, that if *B*'s partner has a better card than *A*'s, it prevents *A* from making either of his trumps, which, had *B* retained the king, he must have done.

98. *A* has three cards of a suit not played, (the last remaining,) viz. king, queen, and ten; *B*, ace, knave, and another; *A* leads the *king;* if *B* wins it he gives up the tenace, and gets but one trick; whereas if he does not, he makes his ace and knave by preserving it.

99. *A* has ace, knave, and ten, of a suit which his partner leads. *Query*, which should he put on? *Answer*, the *ten*, particularly if it is a forced lead; by this he probably wins two tricks. If he puts on the ace, and his partner has no honour in the suit, he gives up the tenace, and can only win one.

100. Tenace is easily kept against your *right-hand*, but impossible, without great superiority of skill, against your *left-hand* adversary.

101. To explain what is meant by playing to points, place the following hand before you: *A* has the two *lowest* trumps, and two forcing cards, with the lead. The two *best demonstrably* in the adversary's hands; though *uncertain* if in the same or divided. Nine cards being played, and no trumps remaining—*Query*, What is *A* to play? *Answer*—This can

only be decided by the situation of the score, and whether or no it justifies the hazarding two tricks for one. The least consideration will convince the player, that before the score is much advanced, it would be highly improper for *A* to play a *trump*, because he manifestly ventured two tricks for one; of course he should secure two tricks by playing a forcing card. But suppose *A* to be at the score of *seven*, and that he has won six tricks, he should then as clearly venture to play the trump, because, if the trumps are divided, he wins the game, or otherwise remains at seven, which is preferable to the certainty of scoring nine. But if the adversary is at nine, this should not be done, as by hazarding the odd trick you hazard the game.

N. B.—This mode of reasoning will in general direct you where and why finesses are proper or improper. For there is scarcely one, though ever so right in general, but what the different situations of the score and hand may render dangerous and indefensible.

102. The following critical stroke decided one of the most material rubbers that ever was played, and is recommended to the attentive perusal even of proficients.

The parties were each at *nine*. *A* had won *six*

tricks, and remained with the *knave* and a *small* trump, and two diamonds with the *lead*. *B*, his left-hand adversary, with the *queen* and *ten* of trumps, and two clubs. *C*, his partner, with two small trumps and two diamonds. *D*, last player, with ace and a small trump, a club and a heart. *A* led a diamond, which, being passed by *B*, was to be won by *D*. *Query*—How is he to play to make it possible to win the odd trick? *Answer*—*D* saw it was not possible, unless his partner had either the two best trumps, or the first and third, with a successful finesse. He, therefore, trumped with the *ace*, led the small one, and won the game.

N. B.—In another score of the game, this would not be justifiable, as the chance of *losing* a trick is greater than of gaining one by it.

103. The attentive perusal (in the mode prescribed) of these maxims, will, I think, with a little practice, enable a beginner to play with very *good cards* to advantage. The difficulty of the game does not consist in *this;* for aces and kings *will* make tricks, and *no* skill can make a *ten* win a *knave*. But there are hands which frequently occur when skilful players win, where bunglers lose points; and (unless when the cards run very high) it is on the playing of *such* success depends, viz. ace or king, and three

other trumps, a tierce-major, with others of a *second* suit, with a *probable trick* in a *third*. The player's plan should be to remain either with the *last trump*, or with the *last* but *one*, with the *lead:* and to accomplish this *last*, he must *not win* the second lead with the commanding trump, but reserve it for the third. Nothing *then* but five trumps in *one hand* can probably prevent his establishing his long suit, for he *forces* out the *best* trump, and the thirteenth brings in his suit again, which, (without the lead after the third round of trumps) would be impossible.

104. As this maxim is one of the utmost consequence, the following cases, which happen frequently, are added, to make it more clearly understood:—

1st. *A* has ace and three trumps, a strong suit headed by a tierce-major, and a probable trick in a third, with a lead. *Query*—How should this hand be played? *Answer*—*A* should lead a trump; but if his partner wins and returns it, *A* should *not* put on his ace, but suffer it to be won by his adversary. When either *A* or his partner gets the lead, he of course plays a trump, which being won by *A*, he remains *with the lead*, and *one*, but not the *best* trump, though they should be not equally divived. This (his strong suit having forced out the *best*) establishes it again, notwithstanding the adversary may command the other

suits which are by these means prevented from making.

N. B.—Had the ace been put on the second lead, the force would have been on *A*, and *his strong* suit entirely useless.

2d. *A*, with a similar hand, has ace, king, and two small trumps. If the adversaries lead trumps, he should not win the *first* trick, even if *last* player. *By this*, after the second lead, he still retains the *best* for the *third*, according to the maxim, and establishes his suit (though the best trump keeps up against him) unless there are five in one hand originally.

3d. With ace, queen, and two small trumps, do not win the *knave* led on your *left-hand*, but let it be played again, according to the same maxim.

As the following, or nearly similar situations frequently occur, I recommend them to the attentive perusal of those students who, feeling within themselves that they comprehend what I have called the alphabet, wish to procure a gradual insight into the game, the whole combinations of which, I cannot too often repeat, proceed from very plain and simple principles; but it requires much reflection to comprehend the same maxim, when applied to inferior cards, that appears self-evident in the superiors. There is scarce-

ly a player, who if he has the ace, king, and knave of the suit of which his right-hand adversary turns up the queen, but will lead the king, and wait for the return to finesse his knave. But with ace, queen, and ten, (the knave being turned up on his right-hand,) the same player will not see that his lead, if he plays a trump, is the *queen*, and that one and the same principle actuates the players on both occasions, and so through the suit.

It constantly happens that the adversary on the right-hand having won his partner's lead with the ace or king returns the *knave*. In this case do not put on the queen, as the probability is against its being finessed. But on all these occasions, play without hesitation, which constantly directs a skilful adversary where to finesse to advantage.

It frequently happens when you have led from six trumps, that after your second lead you remain with three or four trumps, the *best* in your adversary's hand; in these situations play a small trump, which has these two advantages—1st. To prevent the stopping of your partner's suit; and 2nd, to give you the tenace, in whatever suit is led by the adversary. This, *mutatis mutandis*, will show that it is bad play to put out the best trump, leaving others in the hand of *one* of your adversaries. It may do good to keep

it up, by stopping a suit, and can answer no good purpose whatever to play it out.

*A* remains with the best trump (say the ten) and a small one with some losing cards, *B*, his partner, having clearly the second best, (say the nine,) with some winning cards; the adversaries having one small trump and winning cards of the other two suits. *A* is forced. *Query*—How is he to play? *Answer*—*A* is to ruff with the best, and lead out his small trump, by which he puts it into his partner's hand to make *his* winning cards, and renders those of his adversaries of no use whatever. This mode of play would sometimes be right, even when it was not *certain* whether the second best trump were in his partner's or his adversary's hand; but the fine player alone can be expected to distinguish on so nice an occasion.

There are points where good players disagree. Some play what is called a *forward*—others a more *timid* game. Some commonly put on a king second; others but rarely. In these cases a man may play either way, without committing error; but where all good players are of the same opinion, it should he received as an axiom—no good player puts on a queen, knave, or ten second; of course, it should on all occasions be carefully avoided.

105. The possession of the last trump is of most

material advantage in the hands of a good player. *A* has the thirteenth trump, with the ace and four small ones of a suit not played, of which the adversary leads the king and queen; by passing them both, *A* probably makes three tricks in the suit, but had he won the king, he could not possibly make more than one.

106. When it is at your option to be eight or nine, it is material always to choose the former score.

107. Observe carefully what is *originally* discarded by each player, and whether, *at the time*, the lead is with the *partner* or *adversary*. If with the *former*, it is invariably meant to direct the *partner*—if with the *latter*, it is frequently intended to deceive the *adversary*, and induce him to lead to his strong suit.

108. You are not only to take every method to preserve the tenace or advantage of the position to yourself, when it is evident that the winning cards lie between *you* and your adversary, but also to give it as much as possible to your partner, when you perceive the strength in any suit is in the hands of him and your left-hand adversary; always keeping in your mind, that *when* the *latter* or *you* lead, the tenace is *against*, if your partner lead, it is *for the adversary*. It frequently happens, that by winning your partner's trick, when last player, you accomplish this. *A* has *king*, *knave*, (or any other second

and fourth card) with a small one of a suit, that *B*, his left-hand adversary, has the first and third, and another with the lead. If *A* leads his card, and *B*, *your partner*, wins it, you, *last player*, should if possible win the trick, though it is your partner's. By which means you prevent *A* from making a trick, which he must have done, had the lead remained with *B*.

109. As I have ventured to recommend occasional deviations from what is considered as one of the most classic maxims, i. e. leading from single cards, without that strength in trumps, hitherto judged indispensably necessary to justify it, I give the reasons that influence my opinion in favour of this practice, with those generally alleged against it, leaving the reader to determine between them. Two objections are made, which, it cannot be denied, *may* and do happen. The first, that if your partner has the king of the suit *guarded*, and the ace behind it, he loses it; which would not be the case if the lead came from the adversary. The second, and most material, is, that your partner, if he wins the trick, may lead out trumps, on the supposition it is *your strong suit*, or the *adversaries* from suspecting your intention. On the contrary, the *constant* and *certain* advantages are the preservation of the tenace in the other *two suits*,

which I suppose you to *have*, and the *probable* one of making your *small* trumps, which you could not otherwise do. *A* has four small trumps, ace, queen, etc., of the second suit; king, knave, etc., of a third, and a single card of the fourth. In these sort of hands, I am of opinion that the chance of winning, by leading the single card, is much greater than of losing tricks; and I appeal to those who are in the habit of attending whist-tables, whether they do not frequently see the players who proceed more exactly according to the maxims of Hoyle, etc., after losing the game, trying to demonstrate that this ought not to have happened, and that they have been vanquished by the bad, not good, play of their adversaries. I do not recommend *in general* leading from single cards, unless very strong in trumps; but with such hands as I have mentioned, I am convinced it may be occasionally done with *very great*, though not *certain* advantage. It may not be unnecessary to inform the reader, that most of Hoyle's maxims were collected during what may be called the infancy of whist; and that he himself, so far from being able to teach the game, was not fit to sit down even with the third-rate players of the present day.

I shall conclude these maxims by a short recapitulation of the most material ones, by way of fixing them in the minds of the readers.

1st. Let them be assured that, without comprehending the leads, modes of playing sequences, and an attentive observation of the board, it is as impossible to make any progress in the science of whist, as to learn to *spell* before they know their alphabet.

2. That accustoming themselves to reason by analogy will alone teach them to vary their play according to circumstances, and show them that the best play in *some* is the worst in *different* situations of the game. It is common to see even good players hazard the game, merely to gain the applause of ignorant by-standers, by making as much of their cards as they are capable of; but this pitiful ambition cannot be too much guarded against. Avoid also the contrary extreme, the faults of the *old*, and many of the imitators of the *new* school. These never part with a tenace, or *certain* trick, though for the probability of making *several*, and are like fencers who parry well, but cannot attack. No player of this kind can ever excel, though he may reach mediocrity.

I must also repeat my advice to *proficients*, to vary their play according to the set they are engaged with; and recollect that it would be of no advantage to speak French like Voltaire, if you lived with people who are ignorant of the language.

## ON LEADS.

1. The safest leads are, from sequences of three or more cards *lead* the *highest*, and *put on* the *lowest* to your partner's lead, but the *highest* on your adversary's. With a tierce to the king and several others, begin with the *knave*.

2. With ace, king, knave, and *three* small trumps, play out the *ace* and *king*—with only *two* the *king*, and wait for the finesse of the *knave*. In other suits, without great strength in trumps, or with the hopes of a particular *point*, do not wait for the finesse.

3. Ace, king, and five others, lead the ace in *all suits*. With four or less, the lowest, if trumps. In other suits, always the ace, unless all the trumps remaining are with you and your partner; in this case a small one.

4. Ace, queen, knave, etc., in all suits the *ace*. Ace, queen, ten, with others, in *trumps*, a small one; but if with three, unless very strong in trumps, lead the ace in other suits.

5. Ace, knave, with small ones, lead the lowest in trumps; in other suits, if with more than *two*, lead the ace, unless very strong in trumps.

6. Ace, with four small ones, in trumps, lead the *lowest*. If with four or more in other suits, and not very strong in trumps, the *ace*.

N.B.—It is the general custom with ace and one other, to lead the ace—this is right, if you have reason to think it your partner's suit, otherwise lead the small one.

7. King, queen, ten, etc., in all suits lead the king; but if it *passes*, do not pursue the lead, as *certain* the ace is in your partner's hand, as it is often kept up, but change your lead, and wait for the return from your partner when you have the finesse of the ten, if necessary.

8. King, queen, and five others, in all suits, the *king*. With four or less in trumps, lead the lowest. In other suits, always the king, unless you have the two only remaining trumps; if so you may play a small one.

9. King, knave, ten, etc., in all suits, lead the ten. King, knave, and two or more small ones, the lowest.

N.B.—You should not lead from king, knave, and a small one, unless it is clearly your partner's suit, in which case, play off your king and knave.

10. Queen, knave, nine, and others, lead the queen. Queen, knave, with one other, the queen. Queen, knave, with two more, the lowest. Queen, ten, and

two others, the lowest. Queen, and three small ones, the lowest. Queen, or knave, with only two, the queen, or knave.

N.B.—The trump card sometimes occasions a deviation from these rules. *A* has the ace or king, with a sequence from the ten downwards, of the suit of which his left-hand adversary turns up knave or queen. *A* should lead the *ten*. If the knave or queen be put on, you have a finesse on the return with the nine; if not, your partner, with an honour, will pass it, and is either way advantageous.

*The following calculations are sufficient for a beginner; deeper ones frequently puzzle even the proficient:—*

That either player has not one named card not in your hand, is . . . . 2 to 1

5 to 4 in favor of his having . 1 of 2

5 to 2 . . . . 1 in 3

4 to 1 . . . . 1 in 4

N.B.—The odds are so considerable, that no player has two or more named cards, that scarce any situation justifies playing on this supposition, except the impossibility of *saving* or *winning the game* otherwise; of course, further calculations are more for curiosity than utility.

The odds of the game are calculated according to the points, and with the deal:—

1 love . . . 10 to 9
2 love . . . . 10 to 8

and so on, except that 9 is considered as something worse than 8. It is 3 to 1 in favor of the first game.

N.B.—Notwithstanding that calculations are in general accurate, it is difficult to conceive that 10 in 20 is 3 to 1, while 5 in 10 is but 2 to 1, and even 6 in 10 is but 5 to 2. I am convinced whoever bets the 3 to 1, will lose on the long run; and, on the contrary, he who bets the 2 to 1, and 5 to 2, will gain in the same proportion.

The odd trick has always been supposed in favour of the leader: but this is an error, as the dealer has the advantage in this, as in every other score.

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## LAWS OF WHIST.

1. If a card be turned up in dealing, the adverse party, on naming it, may call a new deal, unless they have looked at or touched the cards, so as to have

occasioned it; but if any card, except the last, is faced, it is decidedly a new deal.

2. Should any card-player have but twelve cards, and the others their proper number, the deal is good, and he who has the twelve cards pays for any renounce he may have made; but if either have fourteen cards, the deal is *lost.*

3. If the dealer does not turn up the last card, the deal is lost.

4. The dealer should leave the last card on the table till he has played; after which nobody can ask for it, though they may inquire what is trumps at any time. Should he leave it on the table after the first round, it may be called, as if shown by accident.

5. Every person has a right, before he plays, to call on the players to place their cards before them. It is, therefore, a quibble, to say they have no right to make that demand.

6. The party who reminds his partner to call after the trump is turned up, forfeits a point.

7. If one of the players omit playing to a trick, and remain with a card too many, it is at the option of the adversaries to call a new deal.

8. If *A* plays out of his turn to his partner's lead, the *last* player may play before the *first:* if to his *adversary's*, his partner may be compelled to, or prevented from, winning the trick at their option.

9. Mistakes relative to tricks may be rectified at any time during the game, whether called or not.—Also honours, if proved to have been *called* in time, though not scored; but they cannot be claimed after the trump is turned up.

10. If one party call at any score but eight, the adversaries may, after consulting, call a new deal; the same if one calls without *two*, or the other answers without *one* honour.

11. If any player calls *after* he has played, the adversaries may call a new deal; but not consult together.

12. If any person plays *out of his turn*, the adversaries have the option to call *that* card at any time, or direct the player whose turn it was, to play any suit they choose.

13. If *A*, supposing that he has won a trick, lead again before his partner has played to it, the adversaries may oblige his partner to win it, if he can.

14. Any player may call a card from his adversary, if he names it, and proves the separation. Should he name a wrong one, he may have his best or worst card called of any suit played during the deal.

15. Cards thrown down cannot be taken up again, but may be called by the adversaries; they may be shown down by the player, if sure of every trick.

16. There are in fact four penalties on a revoke, which take place of every other score. The adversaries may take three tricks from the party revoking, or three from their score, or add three to their own; and if there still should remain enough to make the party revoking game, they cannot win it, but remain at nine.

17. A revoke is not established before the party revoking has played again, or the trick been turned and quitted; but the adversaries, at their option, may call for the highest or lowest of the suit at the time, or the card shown at any time during the deal.

18. If a revoke be claimed, the adversaries forfeit the penalties of a revoke, if they mix the cards before it is determined.

19. No revoke can be claimed after the cards are cut for the next deal.

N.B.—It is now settled that either of the players may insist on the cards being placed at any time previous to their being put together.—It is also settled, that where a bet is made, that either of the parties scores two, the bet is won by honours, though the adversary has won the game by cards. Supposing that *A* makes two points, and *B*, his adversary, being at 7, makes three by cards, if *A* has two by honours, he still WINS HIS BET.

## PROPOSED LAWS.

Though these laws are excellent as far as they go, yet experience convinces us they are inadequate to meet the various cases that continually occur at whist-tables. Hence disputes, wagers, references, etc., arise, which are often decided differently by different referees unsatisfactorily to the disputants, and sometimes unaccountably to those interested. It has, therefore, long been a desideratum, that a Code should be attempted, which, having undergone the ordeal of examination by proper judges, should, with any addition they may think proper to make, be hung up in various club-rooms, as a classical authority to be referred to on all occasions. As nobody has yet undertaken this necessary task, whose acknowledged judgment would prevent all difference of opinion, I have attempted something of the kind. The cases, with their decisions, I know to have happened; and the consequent rules which I endeavour to establish are founded on the following principle of all laws, viz. that *penalties* should be in exact proportion to the *advantages possible* to accrue from the transgression.

Whether these regulations are adopted or not, if they stimulate some person, more capable of the task, to accomplish what I fail in, I shall by no means regret the trouble I have taken, or be mortified at the rejection of my opinions.

CASE 1. The parties were each at the score of 8, *A*, the elder hand, called, having but one honour in his hand, and his partner did not answer it. *B*, the next adversary, *though he had two honours*, did not call, as he of course thought it could be to no purpose. The game, being played out, was won against the honours. This was referred on the spot, and decided in favour of the tricks; but, in my opinion, so improperly, that I do not hesitate to propose the following law to be added to the present code:—

"Whoever calls, having only one honour in his hand, should forfeit in proportion to any advantage that actually *does* or *may* possibly accrue from the fault. Should it prevent the adversaries from calling, after the hand is played out, the honours shall take place of the tricks."

CASE 2. The dealer, after showing the trump card, through awkwardness, let it fall on its face. It was determined on the spot that the deal should not stand good; but the card not having been seen, as there could be no possible advantage made by the mistake,

I am of a different opinion, and propose the following addition to the third law, as it now stands in this book:—

"But if the card be shown, and falls on its face by accident *afterwards*, then the deal to stand good."

Case 3. *A*, playing out of his turn, *B*, his partner, was directed to play a trump; *B*, however, led another suit, and three or four cards were played before it was discovered that *B* had a trump in his hand. It was referred to me on the spot, as no printed laws reached the case. I decided that the cards should be taken up again, and a trump led by *B*, as directed. This decision was approved by both parties, and I propose it as a law on any similar occasion.

Case 4. *A* called at 8; his partner did not answer, though he had an honour, having a bet on the odd trick. The adversaries contended that the deal should not stand, and a wager was laid in consequence, and referred to me. I decided that the *game* was fairly won, because there could be no possible advantage made of the circumstances so far as related to the *game*, though it might as to the *trick*, had that been the case referred. I think it impossible to object to the following law, viz.:

"No one is obliged to answer to his partner's call,

even though he has the other two honours in his hand."

CASE 5. *A*, at the score of 8, on gradually opening his hand, saw two honours in it immediately, and told his partner of it, who did not answer. *A*, continuing to look at his cards, found a third honour, and showed them down. It was contended that he had no right to do this, and decided, as I hear, against him; but I am fully convinced, improperly, and I propose a law, that—

"No man with three honours in his hand can be precluded from taking advantage of them at any time previous to his playing a card."

I shall now attempt to frame a law, which, if agreed to, will, in my opinion, put a stop to a practice that, though perhaps not meant to be, is in itself absolutely unfair, and, what is still worse, is the parent of all those unpleasant disputes and altercations, which form the only objections to a game in every other respect calculated for rational amusement. I need scarcely add, that I mean the discovery, by words or gestures, of your approbation or dislike of your partner's play, before the deal is absolutely finished. I do not mean to prevent talking over the last hand between the deals, but that it should be absolutely prohibited, under a severe pen-

alty, to say a word between the turning up of the trump card and playing the last card of the deal, except what is already allowed by the rules of the game—such as to ask what is trumps, to desire the cards may be drawn, etc. The law I propose is this:—

"Whoever shall, by word or gesture, manifestly discover his approval or disapprobation of his partner's mode of play, or ask any question but such as are specifically allowed by the existing Laws of Whist, the adversary shall either add a point to his own score, or deduct one from the party so transgressing, at his option."

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## CONCLUSION.

I have been desired by some beginners, to whom this book is particularly addressed, to give a minute definition of two words, which, though *universally* used, are not *generally* understood. I mean *Tenace* and *Finesse*. Indeed the game depends so much on the comprehension of their principles, that any man desirous of obtaining even a competent knowledge of it will never regret the trouble of the study.

Many parts of Whist are mechanical, and neither maxims nor instructions are necessary to inform the beginner that an ace wins a king; or that you must follow the suit played, if you have one in your hand.

The principle of the *Tenace* is simple. If *A* has the ace and queen of a suit, and *B*, his adversary, has the king and knave, the least consideration will show that if *A* leads, *B* wins a trick, and *vice versa*; of course, in every situation it is the mutual plan of players by leading a losing card to put it into the adversary's hand, to oblige *him* to *lead* that suit, whereby you preserve the tenace. So far is easily comprehended; but it requires attention with practice to apply the *principle*, so obvious in the *superior* to the *inferior* cards, or see that the same tenace operates occasionally with the seven and five, as the ace and queen, and is productive of the same advantage. *A*, *last* player, remains with the ace and queen of a suit not played, the last trump and a losing card. *B*, his *left-hand adversary*, leads a forcing card. *Query*—How is *A* to play? *Answer*—If three tricks win the game, or any particular point, he is not to ruff, but throw away his losing card, because his left-hand adversary being then obliged to lead to his suit, he remains tenace, and must make his ace and queen. But upon the supposition that making the four tricks

gains him the rubber, he should then take the force as in these situations you are justified in giving up the tenace for an equal chance of making any material point.

The *Finesse* has a near affinity to the tenace, except that the latter is equally the object where *two*, and the former only where there are *four*, players. *A* has the ace and queen of a suit led by his partner; now the dullest beginner will see it proper to put on the queen; and this is called finessing it, and the intention is obviously to prevent the king from making, if in the hand of his right-hand adversary. Should it not be there, it is evident you neither gain nor lose by making the finesse; but few players carry this idea down to the inferior cards, or see that a trick might be made by a judicious finesse, against an eight, as a king; but to know exactly when this should be done, requires more skill than in the more obvious cases, united with memory and observation. —Another case of finesse, even against *two* cards, frequently occurs, and the reason, on reflection, is self-evident.

*A* leads the ten of a suit of which his partner has the ace, knave, and a small one; *B* should finesse or let the ten pass; even though he knows the king or queen is in his left-hand adversary's hand; because

he preserves the tenace, and probably makes two tricks; whereas, had he put on his ace, he could make but *one*—in short, tenace is the game of position; and finesse, the art of placing yourself in the most advantageous one.

## OBSERVATIONS ON SHORT WHIST.

Since the publication of this little Treatise, a New Game has come into fashion, which is denoted SHORT WHIST. This, though apparently played on the same principles, is, in many respects, essentially different from the *Long Game;* so much so, that it appears obvious to me, a very critical player at the *one* may be deficient at the *other*. There have been, I presume, two inducements for this alteration; the *one* to promote a quicker circulation of the cash, and make the play deeper; the other to reduce the advantage of the *good* over the *bad* player, by approximating a game of skill still nearer to a game of chance. That it has both these effects is evident, for Short Whist is much higher play at a guinea than Long Whist at two guinea points; and I am convinced that the fewer points to be played for, the greater the advantage to the inferior player. On the supposition that honours, on an average, are four in the Long, and two each

game in Short Whist, I think the *good* player has double the advantage in the former, to what he has in the latter game, having twice the number of points to play for. A very good player at one game would, undoubtedly, by reflection and practice, become so at the other; both are games of attack and defence, and a great deal depends on properly judging which is to be adopted; but no rules can give what depends on natural quickness and observation. In general, however, I think the forward game is oftener right in the New than in the Old Whist. To force your partner, and endeavour to steal a trick, would be thought often allowable in the Short, when in the Long Game it would be condemned.

The odds are also very considerably altered, and, *cæteris paribus*, I conceive it is at least five to four in favour of the dealer for the game; and six to five for the rubber *in the New;* whereas in the Old Game it is at *most* gold to silver, or 21 to 20. To conceive this, you must consider that it is little more than two to one against the turning up an *honour:* and *having* turned one up, it is nearly an even bet that the dealer scores two by honours. For as two out of the other three must be in the *hands* of one party, and the dealer and his partner having twenty-five cards, there is only twenty-six to twenty-five against *their* having them.

This is so decided an advantage, where five is the number to be played for, that I am confident two bad players, with the first deal in every game, would in a long run beat the two best in England.

In Short as in Long Whist, though the knowledge and practice of general rules may constitute a tolerable player, yet to acquire any excellence, a critical perception, when and how these are to be departed from, is absolutely necessary. There are few things to be observed in which there is a considerable difference, in the two games; though *three*, in the *first* instance, is nearly as good as *four* (I mean your adversaries *not* having scored a *point*), still it is by no means so if *they* are also three or four. The reason is obvious: it is the chance of calling which gives eight the advantage over nine; but this not being allowed at *three*, it is evident that if your adversary is at *four*, and you have two by honours, three is not better than two, as without the odd trick you lose the game. Of course, in the beginning of a game, no finesse is justifiable, on which depends your scoring two or four, when you have three certain in your cards.

It is easy to conceive that, with a very good hand, it is not improbable that you may score five, though highly so that you do not *ten*. Of course bold play is

much oftener successful in the Short than in the Long Game, and stealing a trick, which will save the game in the one, will, in case of a great hand, seldom have that effect in the other.

In contradiction, however, to *my* opinions, I hear that the good players are fonder of the *New* than the *Old Game;* though I can see no argument in favour of this, except (as I before premised) that it circulates the money quicker.

I cannot omit one observation:—Though with *good* players, the lead nearly counterbalances the advantages of the *deal*, with *bad* ones it is of little or no advantage; of course it increases that of the dealer. The first lead in both games requires judgment, and is so little comprehended that it is generally twelve to one a wrong card is played, and the fate of the whole hand frequently depends upon *it.* These are, however, such plain situations that it is impossible to make a mistake.

At Short Whist, the *first deal*, there is scarcely any finesse that is not justifiable, when the failure leaves you at *three* instead of *four.*

## POSTSCRIPT.

Being unexpectedly called on for another Edition of this little Treatise, it may be expected I should make some further observations on the various situations which must occur in a game of such extensive combinations. I am vain enough to think, that the *attentive reader* must have acquired a competent knowledge of its principles; but I repeat, that no written maxims can make a *fine Whist-player;* therein "the patient must administer to himself." Were I to define the exact difference between a *good* and a *fine player*, I should say that the former fully comprehends the force of the maxims, and how they are to be followed: the latter as clearly sees when and why they are to be violated. Without a knowledge of the different leads, the common finesses, mode of playing sequences, etc., it would be absurd to call a man even a *bad player*, as indeed he does not play the game at all. Reasoning and observation alone can show a man the situation he is placed in; either by the hopes of winning, or fear of losing the game in the hand he is

actually playing, when it is absolutely *impossible* to do either by the *common mode of playing his cards.* The fine player sometimes accomplishes it by what is called a brilliant stroke. I will mention a case of this kind, which is not an *ideal* one, and will explain my meaning better than any abstract reasoning that I could adopt.

The trumps all out, A remained with the ace, queen, knave, and two others of a suit not yet played, and the lead. The adversaries had five tricks, and the odd trick decided the rubber, consequently he must win four out of the remaining five cards to save it. I need not observe that the ace is the card usually led from such a suit; but A considered that, by so doing, it was highly improbable he should establish the suit, and that his sole hope was to deceive the adversary. He led the queen, which was won by the king; and as his partner had not the ace, the adversary naturally concluded it to be in *his* partner's hand, and of course that, by returning this suit, he must win the game. The consequence was that A won the four tricks and the rubber.

After all that can be said on the subject, Whist is by no means a game of skill like Billiards. The best calculator and Whist-player of his time (Lord William Manners) always maintained that there was no more

than five per cent. odds, between the two best and the two worst players; yet there is scarcely a rubber played where shillings are not given, in other words, ten per cent. for the choice. This, if constantly persisted in, must ruin the *Better:* indeed, this will be the consequence to every man, who *lays* the odds, as they are at present calculated, I mean the *three* to *one*, after the *first game:* the five to two (on six), and two to one on *five love*, are, I think, in favour of the *Better*. In regard to finessing, every player knows the tenace when the *superior* cards are in question, and the *usual* modes of *gaining* it: but there are few who carry this down to the smaller ones, or consider that the same good effects are produced by attention to the latter as to the former. However, this style of play is not to be acquired without the habits of deep playing, as it requires meditation, and a total abstraction from any thought but what is fixed on the cards at the time of playing.

Attention to the minutiæ of the leading the lowest or highest of cards of the same value, such as the deuce or tray, is also the consequence of high play, and, however necessary, seldom attended to for *trifling* stakes. However, I recommend to beginners to play with the same attention for shillings as pounds, and can assure them of a rapid improvement in consequence.

# SHORT WHIST:

## ITS RISE, PROGRESS, AND LAWS;

TOGETHER WITH

## MAXIMS FOR BEGINNERS,

AND

## OBSERVATIONS TO MAKE ANY ONE A WHIST-PLAYER.

BY MAJOR YOUNG.

# PREFACE.

The flattering reception of this little treatise (as evinced by a second edition being required within two short months) has induced the Editor to revise it most carefully. At the suggestion of some of the best players at the first clubs, he has added several laws of the game now observed, but which are either omitted or not clearly expressed in the old authority, Hoyle, in order that the Major may be a standard and complete reference at the Whist-table; also some peculiarities of *Short Whist*, particularly respecting finessing, that will be useful to those wishing to excel in a favorite amusement, and to overcome prejudices as to modes of play. The Whist of Brookes's, White's, and Graham's clubs is no more like country play, than Philidor's game of chess was like that of Mrs. Grundy; remarks, therefore, inducing young players to reflect will be of some service, as they may be assured that skill in nothing, not even in a game at cards, can be acquired without thinking about it.

*St. James's Street, March*, 1835.

# SHORT WHIST

Short Whist started up, and overthrew the ancient Long Dynasty, about twenty-five years ago; yet, strange to say, no historian has hitherto recorded the event. Ought not this most momentous of all revolutions to have its causes and effects investigated? to have its mighty influences upon the fortunes of mankind traced to their source? Yea. Come then, oh Muse! in the shape of the Queen of Trumps, and impart to my feeble hand and pen all the strength and finesse thy welcome presence can give.

This revolution (compared to which those of 1789 and 1630 were mere things of a day) was occasioned by a worthy Welsh baronet preferring his lobster for supper hot. Four first-rate Whist-players—consequently, four great men—adjourned from the House of Commons to Brookes's, and proposed a rubber while the cook was busy. "The lobster must be hot," said the baronet. "A rubber may last an hour," said another, "and the lobster cold again, or spoiled, be-

fore we have finished."—"It is too long," said a third "Let us cut it shorter," said a fourth.—Carried *nem. con.* Down they sat, and found it very lively to win or lose so much quicker. Besides furnishing conversation at supper, the thing was new—they were legislators, and had a fine opportunity to exercise their calling. Let us imagine these four sages to represent the four suits.

Spades (*digging into the bowels of the lobster*). Five shall be game without reckoning honours; thus leaving less to chance and more to skill.

Clubs. Then you will never get indifferent players to play, and knock up the game altogether.

Diamonds. Three should save lurch; and without calling, the honors may be then scored; but not at four.

Hearts. I have finished the lobster; let us try again, upon the last-named principle, with which I am seriously inclined to coincide, and settle it.

All. Agreed.

So they settled to it, and went home in hackney-coaches by day-light, satisfied with having performed this arduous duty.

Next day St. James's Street was in commotion; the Longs and the Shorts formed each a party, and violent was the contention between them. All the

gamblers were Shorts; and, by dint of that eloquence which invariably flows in streams of persuasion when any thing is to be got, succeeded in bringing over many middling players, to think it a good thing to have more frequent opportunities of losing, or, *may be*, winning. The regular old stagers made an obstinate stand; they were Longs to the back-bone. What! (cried they) overthrow the venerable institutions handed down by our forefathers, which we are bound to transmit unsullied to posterity? What is to become of all those calculations of the odds that we have got by rote, and which by prescription are an integral part of the game? How can we become suddenly habituated to this new-fangled rapidity? it is change, but not reform: never will we consent to so great, so dangerous, an innovation. They were soon, however, outvoted; those "whose chariots roll upon the four aces" (1) had succeeded in gaining over the multitude who play Whist without ever thinking about it. The Longs began to give way, fearing to lose their diurnal amusement altogether, and listening to their opponents, who soon made it plain that good steady play would be recompensed, by obtaining a greater advantage, inasmuch as the loss of a critical odd trick,

(1) Provoked Husband.

one out of five, must be oftener fatal than one out of ten; and the events being multiplied, the influence of bad play upon them must be multiplied also. In revenge of the clamouring mob of bunglers, they coalesced with the gamblers; and even went beyond them by introducing French points: thus the stakes were not only imperceptibly doubled by cutting the game in halves, but a very pretty addition made to them by this amendment, which ordained the points played for to be eight, instead of five.

The waves of commotion having thus subsided, the original stirrers-up of the storm, instead of losing their heads, like many of their great prototypes, were installed as lawgivers upon the occasion; they framed a code, which has been observed to this day. Their constituents were, strange to say, all satisfied; and St. James's echoed to the cry of "Long live Shorts!!!"

As frequently happens, however, in another place, where laws are manufactured upon such comparatively trifling matters as trade, taxation, life and death, poor-laws, and the church (all which we must allow to be of very secondary consideration to the noble game of Whist), the House of aces, kings, queens, and knaves made a botch—committed a very glaring and obvious error, which ought to be amended in a future bill; and, as my strength and constitution

have been completely renovated by means which I will impart to the gentle reader before I have done with him, and as I mean to live and stand for the next Whist Parliament, I hereby give notice of a motion to alter and amend the clause which allows four by honours and two by honours to be scored. I have already gone so far as to have a speech made for the occasion; and intend, as is customary, to give Mr. I., the actor, a guinea a lesson, to teach me how to speak it. Here it is:—

"Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, and feeling my inability to do justice to the mighty interests of the illustrious persons, whose presence fills every heart with gladness, I must regret that no abler advocate has taken their cause in hand. Inadequate as are my powers to assign to them all the merit they are entitled to, I am free to confess that a sense of imperative duty impels me to rise, and to take all the sense I can find of the House upon this simple, yet important, point. When the great men who framed the existing law cut the game of Whist in halves, and thereby doubled the pleasure and profit of their pains-taking and most deserving fellow-subjects—when, I say, they boldly cut away the half that was superfluous,—when they with admirable arithmetic made what used to be ten five, ought they

not to have cut the whole—ought they not to have cut the honours in halves also? By omitting this, they have done their work by halves. (*Hear! hear!*) Is it not sense, is it not justice, is it not reason, that, the game being halved, all parts of it should have been halved, and three honours reckoned one point, four honours reckoned two points? Thus would the aristocratic portion of this useful game be kept within due bounds,—would not, by possessing (as at present) an undue and unpopular power and preponderance, excite those feelings which must ultimately be injurious even to themselves; and which they will, no doubt, with their well-known liberality, now willingly concede.

"I must add, however, that whatever is given up, they will yield from a sense of right,—not giving way to idle clamour, which they despise, as it is well known they are thorough game.

"I therefore conclude by moving, first, for an authentic return of what is scored at Whist in the best societies, distinguishing between what is scored by *tricks* and what by *honours*;—and, when these are officially before the House, secondly, that a committee be appointed to search into the laws of this important game generally, and to report if great benefit to the public may not arise from any, and what, alterations in them."

## LAWS OF SHORT WHIST, AS NOW PLAYED.

1. The game is five up; one point scored saves a triple game; three points scored saves a double game. The rubber is reckoned two points, making eight in the whole.

2. Honours are not scored at the point of four.

3. In cutting for partners, the two highest and the two lowest play together; the lowest deals, and has the choice of cards and seats: the ace is lowest. Should a second cut be requisite in consequence of two or three cards of equal value being cut, and the *lowest* of the original four *not* be one of those who cut a second time, that original lowest has the deal and choice, notwithstanding two lower cards may be cut subsequently.

4. Every player has a right to shuffle the cards; but the dealer *has the option* of shuffling last; no one can alter the pack in any way after the cards are cut.

5. A less number than four cards taken from the top, or left at the bottom, is not a fair cut;—they must be replaced, and the cards cut again.

6. Should any card be exposed, or seen in cutting, the cards must be reshuffled and cut again.

7. The dealer is not allowed to touch the cards on the table, in order to rectify any error, or supposed error, in dealing; and cannot take back a card from more than one parcel; that is to say, if he drops two cards by mistake, and has continued beyond the hand on which the extra card fell, it is a misdeal.

8. If the dealer turns up a card by his own fault, the adverse party, on naming it, may call a new deal before the trump is turned; but if any card except the last be faced, it is a new deal of course.

9. If, however, either of the adverse party touch the cards during the operation of dealing, they cannot call a fresh deal under any circumstances, and, in case of a misdeal, the dealer is entitled to deal again.

10. Any one dealing out of turn may be stopped before the trump card is turned; if not discovered until afterwards, the deal goes on in rotation; and where two packs of cards are used (as is now the custom) the packs as changed must so continue.

11. Should any player have but twelve cards, and the others their proper number, the deal stands; and he who has the twelve cards (supposing the pack to have been originally perfect) is subject to the penalty for any revoke he may have made; but if either have fourteen cards, the deal is lost. *Count your cards as you sort them.*

12. If the dealer drop the last card upon others with the face downwards before it has been seen, he loses the deal; it is, however, permitted to place it apart, while bets are made, or the former deal settled.

13. The dealer should leave the trump card on the table till he has played, after which no one is entitled to see it, but may inquire at any time what suit is trumps. Should the trump card be left on the table after the first trick is turned, it may be called.

14. Every player, before a trick is put together, may insist upon knowing who played a particular card, or require each to lay his card before him, which comes to the same thing. Formerly the demand for a particular card must be made before playing; but, according to the authority of my old friend Mathews, it was settled otherwise,—and very properly.

15. If one of the players omit playing to a trick, and remain with a card more than the rest, the adversaries have the option of calling a new deal.

16. If the third player play before the second, the fourth or last player may play before his partner; if the fourth player play before the second (his partner), the second may be compelled to win, or prevented from winning the trick.

17. After four cards are played, no error in playing out of turn can be rectified.

18. Mistakes in scoring tricks may be rectified at any time during the game, whether called or not—also honours, if proved to have been *called* in time; namely, before the trump card of the next deal is turned up.

19. If any person lead out of his turn, the adversaries have the option either to call the card so played, at any time, or to call at the time any suit they choose from the partner who ought to have played.

20. If any one, supposing he has won a trick, lead again before his partner has played to it, the adversaries may oblige the partner to win it.

21. A card to be called must have been separated from the rest—and named. Should he who calls a card name a wrong one, he may have his best or worst card of any suit called during the deal.

22. An exposed card, or a suit, must be called before the party plays; but he may be desired to stop, and the adversaries may consult as to calling.

23. A card is liable to be called if named, or even hinted by any player to be in his hand.

24. If a player trumps a suit by mistake, and the adversary plays a small card in consequence, the small card may be taken back (without being liable to be called), and the trick won with a higher card.

25. Cards thrown down must remain upon the table, and may be called by the adversaries.

26. If a person declares he "can win the game," or "win so many tricks," or speaks in such a way as to inform his partner that he has either a good or a bad hand, he may be compelled to lay his cards upon the table to be called.

27. Any one is entitled to ask at any time "what suit is trumps?" but not to be informed which was the trump card.

28. A player is entitled at any time to see the last trick turned, but never to see more than eight cards.

29. There are three ways of exacting a penalty for a revoke, which takes place of every other score:—three tricks may be taken from the party revoking; or three points from their score; or three added to their adversaries' score. And whichever way the penalty may be taken, the revoking party must remain at four, notwithstanding sufficient might have been left to make them game. (1)

(1) There is frequently judgment required in selecting the penalty for a revoke. If the revoking party be four love, add three to your own score, as it saves a double game, and puts you at three to four: if he be at three, take them away from his score, and so on. In taking away his tricks, recollect you may safely leave him to reckon honours: as he must remain at four, it is only to calculate how the scores will remain, after the penalty is taken.

30. A revoke is not established before the party revoking or his partner has played again, or the trick has been turned and *quitted;* but the adversaries may call for the highest or lowest of the suit at the time, or the card shown at any period of the deal.

31. If a revoke be claimed, the adversaries forfeit as for a revoke, if they mix the tricks before it is settled.

32. No revoke can be claimed after the cards are cut for the next deal.

33. Whoever shall, by word or gesture, show his approval or disapproval of his partner's mode of play, *during the deal*, or make any remark, or ask any question, not specially allowed by the Laws of Whist, shall forfeit one point, either to be added to the adversaries' score, or deducted from his own, at their option.

34. If the dealer looks at the bottom card, he loses his deal.

35. Whoever loses his temper, and scolds, should be cut, and never come again.

There are two, or perhaps three, clubs in London where it is ruled, that whoever scores honours without having had them forfeits the number scored: this is a rule that ought to become general.

Having given the laws above, with which every

one who plays ought to be acquainted, let us proceed to lay down some of the principles of the game; premising, that no written instructions can make a fine Whist-player. Common attention, however, to the effects of different leads, and of the ordinary combinations, if looked into, with the *cards before you*, will enable any one to cut in if requested, and to defend his money.

The old discussion, whether Short Whist is to the advantage of the good or middling player, seems to be settled, like many others, by both retaining their own opinion. Mathews, the most gentleman-like and best Whist-player of the Long school, in his Short Observations published upon the new game, as he calls it, has expressed his opinion that it was in favour of the middling; but, to my certain knowledge, he lived to change it, and to see how frequently indifferent play prevented saving a game; for it is in playing bad cards to advantage that superior skill is most manifest. Another discussion, as to whether this game was to he played in a different manner from the old, still exists. You will constantly hear dogmatists say, "It is dangerous to finesse at Short Whist." The good player knows that a finesse, to be a finesse, must be made *à propos*, which nothing but *knowledge* and *quickness* can teach. The point in dispute may be

thus settled:—How would good players play at five-all in the old game? They would play to make five to win the game, or three points to score eight for the advantage of calling: this is precisely the new game —the attack and defence is therefore the same as at five-all. The introduction of Short Whist, however, had the effect of improving Whist-players generally; scarcely a bungler now exists who does not know that five tricks with one honour saves the game. Whereas, formerly, bad Whist-players were like travellers upon a straight French road, between a long vista, which seemed to have no end and no variety; they played the same from one end of the game to the other, always thinking of ten points; now they have learnt that a sudden turn on a rapid Macadamized turnpike may bring its *coup de grâce;* and they, as well as they can, look to the score, and play to points: it is, therefore, almost unnecessary to say,—

1. Never risk the fifth trick with a bad hand, but play out a winning card.

2. Supposing you to have four tricks, your adversaries to have five tricks, and you have the lead with king, three of a suit, and one losing card, of which you know your adversaries to have the best, lead the losing card, as your best chance of making your king is for the adversaries to lead that suit.

3. The good player plays his partner's hand and his own, or twenty-six cards; the bad player his own thirteen only. Play a losing card rather than lead a weak fresh suit; as it is probable, if the adversaries lead that suit, your partner may screw out a trick with even the third best of it, by becoming last player.

4. The original lead will often effect the loss or saving of the game. With a bad hand, lead that suit which is least likely to injure your partner's hand. It is clear that, unless he holds an honour, and can make at least four tricks, the game is gone; as you can make, perhaps, at most one. Do not, therefore, lead from four or five small cards; rather lead out a king from king and two others. Queens and knaves are strengthening cards. Many players differ as to leading single cards when weak in trumps. It appears to me oftener to defeat than to gain its own object; as, unless your partner holds the ace of the suit, or the king with the ace on his right, you inevitably sacrifice the king or a good card: you moreover run the risk of being defeated by your own partner; as he, with other strong suits, will give you credit for strength instead of weakness in this, and lead trumps.

It must, however, be admitted, that there is more

probability your partner will have a good finesse, or some strength in the suits, of which you have only one or two, than in those of which you have five small ones. The knowledge of the following odds will help to guide the lead:—

i. It is two to one that your partner does not hold a certain card.

ii. It is nearly five to four that your partner holds one card out of any two.

iii. It is nearly three to one that he does *not* hold two cards out of any three.

iv. It is about five to two that he holds one card out of three.

v. It is about three to two that he does *not* hold two cards out of four.

vi. It is about four to one that he holds one card out of any four.

5. Suppose you to be leader, with knave, ten, nine, three, and two of clubs, five small trumps, one small diamond, and two small spades, lead the nine of clubs; as it is five to two in your favour that your partner holds an honour, you have the best chance of clearing your suit; as, be it remembered, in clearing a suit, it is almost as necessary to take the command from your partner as from your adversaries. If, in this case, your partner has no honour, the nine will

draw one, and two only remain against you. by this method of play you have,—1st, the advantage of making your partner last player in your two weak suits; 2dly, the best chance of a saw, as your partner may probably trump clubs, and you trump diamonds; 3dly, if the adversary returns clubs, from disliking to open a fresh suit, you, (having five trumps) may establish your suit. Upon the same principle, with a king, knave, and ten of a suit, lead the ten.

6. The safest leads are from sequences. It is usual to lead the highest; but it is also usual to lead the knave from king, queen, knave; which is done with a view of getting the ace out of your partner's hand, if he has it, or of stealing a trick if the ace should lie on your left. The same is applicable to all circumstances. If you wish your partner to put on his best, lead the lowest of a sequence; if you wish him to finesse, lead the highest. To your partner's lead put on the lowest of a sequence and return the highest; to your adversaries' lead put on the highest.

7. With king, queen, ten, in all suits lead the king; but if it passes, do not therefore conclude the ace to be in your partner's hand, as it is often kept up. You can change your lead, and wait for the return of the suit, when you will have the finesse of a ten at a critical point.

8. With king, queen, five of a suit, always lead the king; with four in trumps, lead the lowest; in other suits the king, unless you have the only remaining trumps: in that case you may lead the lowest.

9. With king, knave, and two or more small cards, lead the lowest. Avoid leading from king, knave, and one small one. If forced to do so, and if the strength in that suit clearly is with your partner, lead the king and knave.

10. With queen, knave, nine, and others, lead the queen; queen, knave, and one other, the queen; queen, knave, with two others, the lowest; queen, with three small ones, the lowest.

11. The trump card, of course, will occasion some deviation from these rules. Leading the ten through knave or queen gives your partner the choice of a finesse. If you have ace or king, ten, nine, and others, lead the ten, through an honour; if the knave or queen be put on, you have a finesse yourself, on the return of the suit, with the nine.

12. With ace, king, knave, six trumps, play out the ace and king: with ace, king, knave, five trumps, it is safer to play the king, and wait for the finesse, unless you have in other respects a decidedly commanding hand. In other suits, without great strength in trumps, or with the hope of establishing the suit, do not wait for the finesse.

13. With ace, king, five, lead the ace in all suits; with four or less in trumps, the lowest; also the lowest of any other suit, if the remaining trumps are with you, and if three tricks in the suit are necessary.

14. With ace, queen, knave, and others, in all suits the ace; ace, queen, ten, and two others, in *trumps*, a small one, but in other suits the ace, unless strong in trumps. It is so common to find middling players who will *never* lead from ace, queen, that it is necessary here to observe, that many games are lost by this habit. It is often better to lead from ace, queen, than to open a weak suit.

15. With ace, knave, and three small ones, lead the lowest in trumps; in other suits, the ace, unless strong enough in trumps to have a hope of establishing the suit.

16. With ace and four small cards in trumps, lead the lowest; in other suits, the ace, except when strong in trumps.

17. With ace and one other, it is usual to lead the ace; it is good play, however, to lead the small one, if you have reason to think your partner weak in the suit.

The above outline of the leading leads, and the motives for them, will enable any reflecting person to

adapt his play to the infinite varieties of Whist. We will now proceed with some further instructions, that may be useful to players of every grade.

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## PECULIARITIES OF SHORT WHIST.

The leader is usually supposed to have the advantage in playing for the odd trick; it depends, however, entirely upon the nature of his hand; in most cases the dealer, as last player, has the advantage, in this as in every other score.

There is a possibility of making eleven points upon the cards, namely, seven by tricks, and four by honours; as it is never requisite to make more than five at *Short Whist*, a trick or two may often be given away with advantage, in order to make sure of the game: consequently,—

1. With five trumps, and a good suit, refuse to be forced, which intimates the strength of your hand to your partner, and perhaps will enable you to make three tricks instead of one. No good player will play for more than the game, unless indeed to show off to the gallery; opportunities of making brilliant strokes,

and astonishing the natives, occur so seldom, that it requires some forbearance to refrain from attempting them, to your own disadvantage.

2. Under-play is also more frequently allowable at Short Whist; that is to say, keeping up a best card, and permitting the adversaries to make a trick or two, either in trumps or in a long suit, in order to secure the next yourself.

3. Middling players must, however, be cautious of attempting to run before they can walk; they must recollect, on the one hand, that the ace of trumps played out can make but one trick, and draw three other cards; kept back it may protect a small one. On the other hand, that there are thirteen cards to a suit only, consequently they must judge from the number, say five or six, in their own hands, and the adversaries' play, (as leading from sequences or not,) whether the suit is divided so as to make it probable that the cards desired will fall to the ace. The state of the score is the surest guide, as a *certain* odd trick is infinitely preferable to making two by any risk, when the two are not wanted.

4. Deep finessing in trumps, or in a good suit when *strong in trumps*, has also often great effect: thus, suppose you have ace, ten, two other hearts (trumps) and king, knave, or even king ten, or ace knave, or

ace ten, with three other clubs; should your partner lead clubs, finesse the knave, or ten (as he has, perhaps, led from a single card); your left-hand adversary, supposing you to be weak in the suit, will probably return it; your partner then trumps; or if your partner has two clubs, you either gain the lead, on the second round with the ace, or get rid of the ace, and establish your king, to a certainty. This method tends to mitigate the danger of leading from a single card, when weak in trumps, as, supposing trumps to be immediately led, you are still strong in the suit the adversaries mutually conceive they have.

5. The game is against the above-named eleven cards, as there may be two by honours, and three by cards made by the adversaries; still the finesse recommended is the most probable method to make the five tricks requisite to save the game; for if your partner has a very bad hand, and if the king of your only good suit is lost, you are then at the opponents' mercy: on the other hand, should your partner hold one honour, and some strengthening cards, queens or knaves, in the other suits, you having also a king guarded, or an ace among your remaining four cards, may, by establishing your five-card suit, make the odd trick;—*à plus forte raison*, having

ace, queen, two other trumps, and ace, queen, nine, and another of a suit led by your partner put on the *nine*, which induces the adversary either to lead trumps, or to return the suit.

6. Strength in trumps can alone justify deep finessing in other suits; but as at *Short Whist* scarcely a hand is played in which the game may not either be saved or won, there is (contrary to the received opinion) more scope for finessing *judiciously* than in the old game.

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## MAXIMS FOR BEGINNERS.

Recollect that maxims can only be laid down generally; that it is necessary to alter and modify them according to the many changes which arise, and sometimes to desert them, and adopt a different mode of play altogether. The distinction between a *good* player and a *fine* player is, that the former knows the different leads and common finesses, and plays his cards correctly, so as never to deceive his partner; he observes the rules and maxims generally: the fine

player sees at a glance when it is necessary to disregard all maxims, and by adapting his play to circumstances, makes an effort, which, if successful, may save or win the game. Thousands sit down to play Whist, and millions of pounds are made to change hands yearly by its powers of transfer; nine persons out of ten, however, would lock their doors, if they sat down to study the principles of the game (which cannot be done effectually without the cards before them), from a dread of being caught, as if they were ashamed of being seen to learn what they are not ashamed of being seen to practise: this gives professors a decided advantage. We learn to ride, to shoot, to play billiards, to fence, to box: we study the elements of other amusements, chess, for instance; why should we then expect to find a royal road to the acquirement of Whist?

Playing Whist at a regular and moderate stake cannot fairly be termed gaming; many have, nevertheless, injured their fortunes by it, particularly at their outset in life, by playing high stakes too soon—by attempting to practise before acquiring a competent knowledge of the theory. As a relaxation, games of skill are a happy invention; like all other things, if followed to excess, they are pernicious. So necessary, however, is occupation to mankind, that more

toil is frequently submitted to for amusement than is undergone in business. How many will sit at Whist all night, playing shilling or half-crown points; it is a fascinating and interesting game, but, as I can testify from woful experience, nothing is more prejudicial to health than these long sittings. I attribute shattered nerves and general debility to the morning club and the evening rubber: I was obliged to discontinue the amusement; and, after consulting half the medical men in London, I must, out of gratitude, mention here, notwithstanding the laugh may be against me, that I tried, in despair, Harvey's Restorative Cordial, advertised by a Society for the Restoration of Health, 90 Charlotte Street, Rathbone Place, which set me on my legs again, which has stimulated me to, and enabled me also to undergo the fatigue of writing these pages, which will, I hope, be serviceable as a warning to youth against play, and to age, debility, or premature decay, as pointing out a means of relief.—But to Whist.

Never lead a card without a reason—a bad reason is better than playing at random without any at all. Avoid forming a method or system upon observation of one or few results, as bad play may in one or two instances succeed, when good would not. Before you play, sort your hand carefully; look at the trump

card, and consider the scores, the strength of your own hand, and probable strength of your partner's; also the situation of the cards according to calculation, subject, however, to any changes that may be indicated in the course of play; after which, keep your eye on the board instead of poring over your own hand: without strict attention to the fall of the cards, no maxims, or even practice, can make a tolerable Whist-player.

Pondering over the cards, and drawing out first one and then another, is a great disadvantage to the player, and very tiresome both to his partner and opponent.

Be cautious not to deceive your partner in *his* or *your own leads*, or when he is likely to have the lead —a concealed game often succeeds in the suits of your adversaries; but this should not be attempted before having made considerable proficiency, and, if too frequently resorted to, will destroy its own effect.

At the commencement of a game, a good hand is entiled to play a bold game; or, if the adversaries are considerably advanced in the score, a middling hand should be so played as to strengthen the partner's, as it is evident the game must be lost if he is weak also; lead, therefore, boldly, kings, queens, knaves, from

three of a suit, or the highest trump you have; if the scores are equal, (two or three all, for instance,) play more cautiously.

Be as careful of what you throw away as of what you lead. It is frequently of consequence to put down even a tray with a deuce in your hand.

Your partner leads a four; your right-hand adversary plays a five; if you put down a tray, it ought to be *certain* that you have no more of the suit; but if the deuce makes its appearance afterwards, it will destroy all confidence in your play, and you will be justly set down for a *spoon*. These minor qualifications of Whist-playing are attainable by every body; and when once the great advantage of this kind of correctness is seen, the worst player will practise it as constantly as the best, common attention being all that is requisite.

With two cards only of a suit, leading the highest, and playing the lowest afterwards, shows your partner that you have no more, and that you have led for a ruff.

Do not lead trumps merely because an honour is turned up on your left, or be deterred from it if on your right hand; either is proper if circumstances require trumps to be led.

Finessing is generally advantageous in trumps, or

in the other suits when strong in trumps, as tending to promote the desirable object of establishing the long trump and the long suit.

*Never* trump an uncertain card if strong, or omit to do so if weak in trumps, even if you know the best of the suit to be in your partner's hand. The advantages are making a useless trump, intimating the state of your hand to your partner, and of keeping the command (perhaps of the adversaries' only suit) in your partner's hand. Keep the command of your adversaries' suit as long as you possibly can, but never that of your partner.

Do not trump a thirteenth card second hand if strong, but always if weak in trumps.

Always force the strong hand, seldom the weak; never both, otherwise you give one of the adversaries an opportunity to make his small trumps while the other throws away his losing cards: the extent of this error is seldom comprehended by unskilful players, who, seeing the good effect of judicious forces, misplace them to their own disadvantage.

The effect of a force may be exemplified by the following extreme case:

A has six minor trumps and a septième major in another suit with the lead; B, his adversary, has a seizième major in trumps, a quart major, and a tierce

major of the other suits: if A, relying upon his six trumps, lead a trump (and many say with six trumps always lead one) he loses *every trick;* if, on the contrary, he forces B once, he inevitably gains the odd trick; the same principle operates through every combination of the fifty-two cards: a conviction of it is one of the first necessary steps towards an insight into the game; and although so great an effect may be seldom produced, there is scarcely a rubber played wherein the soundness of the principle of forcing is not experimentally proved.

When with a very strong suit you lead trumps, hoping your partner may command them, show your suit first; if a strength in trumps is in your own hand, play them without showing your suit.

With the ace and three other trumps it is seldom right to win the first and second lead, if made in them by the adversaries, unless your partner ruffs a suit.

With strength in trumps, more particularly if having a long suit, avoid ruffing your right-hand adversary's leads. This maxim is less practised, but more necessary, than almost any other, and may be exemplified as follows:

The cards being nearly equal, the object of the good Whist-player is to establish a long suit: to keep the long trump to bring it in, and to frustrate the

same plan of his adversaries. With an honour (or even the ten), and three other trumps, you may by good management succeed. Do not overtrump your right-hand adversary early, but throw away a losing card; one trump being thus gone strengthens your hand: and your partner, as last player, has that advantage in whatever suit is led. Whereas, had you overtrumped, you would have given up the whole chance of the game to secure one trick: but this, like all rules, is not without exceptions; namely, if your left-hand adversary has shown a great superiority in trumps, then make whatever tricks you can. If your partner (a good player) means obviously to force you, of which you may judge by his playing a winning or losing card of the suit to be trumped; if the former, he may not intend to force you; if the latter, you may give him credit for strength in trumps to protect your long suit. In short, it is bad to play for a great game with a weak hand, or a weak game with a strong hand, when the state of the scores requires the reverse.

If circumstances make two leads in trumps requisite, play the ace, let your other trumps be what they may.

It is an old dogma not to force your partner unless strong in trumps yourself; there are, however, many exceptions to this rule:

If your partner leads with a view to be forced, or from a single card.

If great strength in trumps appears to be against you.

If there is a probability of a saw.

If your partner has been already forced, and did not lead trumps.

If you are playing for an odd trick only.

It is a nice point to know when to lead trumps. The following observations will assist beginners in reasoning upon this essential part of the game :—

With six trumps, if you have, or suppose your partner to have, a strong suit.

If strong in other suits, but weak in trumps, particularly having a knave or ten to lead in.

If your adversaries show weakness in the other suits.

If your adversaries are at the point of three, and you have no honour, or probability of a ruff.

It must, however, be borne in mind, that leading a weak trump destroys tenace in them, and often sacrifices your partner's trumps; the ulterior object in other suits must therefore be the guide.

When an adversary refuses to trump, and throws away a small card, it indicates that his hand consists of a strong suit in trumps, one strong, and another

weaker suit; if he throws away a high card, it shows that he has two suits only, one of which is trumps. In these cases avoid leading trumps or his suit; force him, and give your partner an opportunity to trump and overtrump. It is a common fault with bad players to lead trumps the moment an adversary refuses to ruff, which is playing his game, and is likely to give away many tricks, which forcing him would have saved.

If strong in trumps, and the right-hand adversary leads a suit of which you have ace, king, and two others, you may either put on the ace, and continue the same suit, in order to force your partner, or put on a small one, in the hope of your partner's winning the first trick in the suit; this is not allowable if you are weak in trumps. If you win your partner's lead with the queen, it is not judicious to return it, except in trumps.

It is bad to lead from three cards, unless in sequence. When obliged to do so, particularly if you have reason to think your partner strong in the suit, lead the highest, though it be the king or queen.

The first object is to save the game, the second to win it, and hazardous play is justifiable, with reasonable prospect of obtaining either of these ends. If neither is in question, play to the scores; that is to

say, do not give up the certainty of an odd trick, or of scoring three, for the chance of making two or four. An equal finesse may be risked, that will (if it succeeds) prevent the adversaries from these scores.

It is essential to return your partner's lead in trumps; you may, however, judge of the propriety of doing so, according to your own hand, if the trump he led is an equivocal card, a nine or ten, for instance, which are led with propriety both from strong and from weak suits, the nine may be led from a quint to a king, or from king, knave, ten, nine. It is also led when it is the best of one or two others.

With four trumps only, do not lead them until your strong suit is established, as that number is not sufficient to bring in a suit of which you have not the command; the same position of cards will demonstrate the advantage of leading a small card from ace, king, five of a suit: for, without the long trump, you will be foiled in the suit for which you have led trumps, if either adversary have the queen guarded of it. It is good play, however, with a tierce major in trumps, to lead trumps twice before you lead your suit to clear it.

If you remain with the best trump, and one of the adversaries has the others, do not play it out, as it may stop a long suit of the other adversary, and prevent

*his* getting the lead again. If both adversaries have trumps, and your partner none, it is generally right to take two for one. If strong in trumps, and having the commanding card of the adversaries' suit, of which you find your partner has none, lead small ones to force him, and keep the commanding card back.

If your partner leads the ace and queen of a suit, of which you have king and two others, win his queen in order that you may not stop his suit.

When your right-hand adversary wins, and returns his partner's lead, particularly in trumps, if you have the best and a small one, play the small one, as your left-hand adversary will probably finesse, and allow your partner to make the third best.

Be careful to show your partner that you command in trumps; he will then keep his own strong suit entire, instead of guarding the adversaries' suit, as he ought to do when the strength in trumps is with them.

If your partner lead a trump, and you have ace, knave, and another, you should be guided by the object of getting two rounds of trumps, whether to put on the ace, or to finesse the knave. If he leads the ten, it should certainly be passed, unless at a point when the risking one trick would be dangerous.

The lead from ace, nine, is safer than from ace,

ten, as the tenace is more probable in the latter when the suit is led by the adversary.

Throwing a best card to a partner's winning card indicates that the best cards of that suit are behind; throwing a second-best card indicates having no more of the suit.

It is always right to inform your partner if you are strong in trumps; to do this, if fourth player, win with the highest of a sequence, and lead the lowest.

If strong in trumps, do not ruff the second-best of a suit led by your partner; rather throw away a losing card, except when you have a saw.

If ten cards are played, and one suit only remains, should your partner lead, and you have king, ten, and another, you can make one trick to a certainty. Thus, if an honour is put on by the right-hand adversary, cover it with the king; if not, put on the ten. Wanting two tricks you should put on the king.

If the fourth player wins a trick, it is frequently better to return that suit than to open a fresh one, in which he is weak.

With ace, knave, and another of a suit, when the king is led, you can pass it, frequently to great advantage.

With ace, queen of a suit, should the knave be led on your left, put on the ace invariably, as the king must be behind you.

With only three of a suit, put an honour upon an honour, except the ace upon the knave, with four or more not unless you have the ten.

With king and one more, it is sometimes good play to put it on, and sometimes not; a previous determination, however, which to do prevents hesitation, that betrays the hand. If turned up, the king should be invariably put on.

If the only remaining trumps are between you and your partner, and you have no winning card, lead a small trump, in order to give your partner the lead.

Nothing teaches the importance of leads sooner than playing dummy strictly.

It is often of great advantage to win the adversaries' leads with the highest of a sequence, as it keeps them in the dark as to where the others are.

A thirteenth card is usually led with a view to the partner's putting on a high trump, in order to make trumps separately.

Return the highest, having only three cards of your partner's lead; it gives him the finesse, and shows you are weak in the suit.

If you have ace, ten, and a small card of a suit, of which your partner leads the nine, pass it, although the finesse is against three cards; for if your part-

ner has an honour you make two tricks; if not, you can make no more than the ace by any mode of play.

With king, queen, or queen, knave, and only one other card of the suit, always play one of the honours second hand.

Having the remaining trumps, some winning cards, and one losing card, play that first, as your partner may thereby make the second best, which he could not do if kept till the last.

When your partner refuses to trump a winning card, lead trumps as soon as you can, and the best trump in your hand.

When the queen is led on your right (presuming it to be from the usual queen, knave, nine) and you have ace, or king, ten, and a small one, by passing the queen you have the tenace, and should your partner hold either ace or king, must make three tricks in the suit.

When your partner has evidently a weak hand, by playing an obscure game tricks are frequently made. When your partner has a good hand, play as clear a game as possible.

It is, although contrary to usual practice, equally advantageous to lead up to, as through an ace turned up; not so much so up to a king, and disadvantageous up to queen or knave.

Having ace, king, and two more trumps, insure three rounds, if your partner leads them originally; but if he leads a nine, or an equivocal card, in consequence of supposing you strong, pass it; by which you will have the lead after the third round of trumps.

With ace, queen, ten of the right-hand lead, put on the ten.

When the left-hand adversary refuses to trump a winning card, from fear of being overtrumped, and throws away a losing card, if you have the best of the suit he discards, play it before you lead the other suit again. The commanding card of the adversaries' suit is as valuable as a trump when the trumps are out.

If the right-hand adversary leads, and his partner putting on the knave or queen, your partner wins with the king, when the right-hand leads a small card of that suit again, put on the ten if you have it; as it is probable you will keep the ace in your partner's hand by doing so.

If weak in trumps, keep guard on your adversaries' suits; if strong, throw away from them: in all cases, discard from your partner's strong suits.

Should the left-hand adversary lead a king, and stop, to show he wishes to finesse the knave, if you

have queen and another, it is clear his finesse must succeed. By playing a small one yourself, when you get the lead, you will frequently deter him from making his intended finesse.

Force your partner when he shows a weak game.

It is indispensable to stop a long suit by putting on the best trump, when single, at once, in order to prevent throwing away losing cards, if that long suit be suffered to continue. Bad players have an aversion to do this; they also put it on when having others, merely from fear of being over-ruffed. This is the contrary extreme, and judgment is requisite to avoid it.

When your partner has shown a strong suit, and has a renounce in another suit, if you have a single card of his strong suit, play it before you force him; as it is the way, either to establish a saw, which is usually advantageous, or it induces the second player to put on the ace if he has it, and thereby clear your partner's suit.

Having ace, knave, ten, and a small card of a suit led by the right-hand adversary, put on the ten, *if in trumps; if in other suits*, a small one: because, from king, queen, and two trumps, a small one ought to be led; from other suits, the king; consequently, in the latter case, if the king is not led it must be

over you, and playing your ten can be of no use. On the contrary, it gives away a strong game in the suit.

With a losing trump, and ace, queen, or any other tenace, when only three cards remain, play the losing trump, in order to have your tenace led to.

It is frequently necessary to deceive the adversary, and to throw down a high card, to induce him to change his lead; but this must be done without hesitation, and not too frequently.

There is a great distinction to be made between original and forced leads, which beginners do not sufficiently consider. When a partner changes his lead on account of some fall of the cards, this *forced lead* is to be treated as if it were the adversaries' or your own lead, and the tenace and commanding card kept in it, if possible; nor is it to be returned like an original lead.

There is nothing more necessary to be thoroughly comprehended than *under-play*, as it is a constant and successful manœuvre practised by the experienced against the inexperienced players. It consists in keeping back the best card, and playing a low one, particularly when returning the left-hand adversary's leads; it is then done with a view to your partner making the third best if he has it, while you still re-

tain the commanding card. To exemplify:—Suppose the fourth player to have ace, king, and small ones, of his left-hand adversary's lead; if he wins with *the ace*, and returns a small one, his partner will make the third best, unless the second and third are both against him. It is evident from this, if you lead from the king, and your right-hand adversary, after winning with the ten or knave, return your lead, that the best chance to make your king is to put it on.

Remaining with the first, third, and fourth cards of a suit, of which you suppose the left-hand adversary to have the second guarded, by playing the lowest, it is usually passed, and you make every trick.

If you have the second, third, and other cards, as, for example, king, knave, and others, against ace, queen, and one other only remaining, *lead the king;* as, if the queen is single, you draw the ace at the same time, and make every other trick: this is a stroke seldom comprehended by middling players.

Under-play, as described, is seldom resorted to with advantage, except in trumps, or when strong in them in the other suits.

The trump card should be kept as long as possi-

ble for the information of your partner, when he leads trumps; but the reverse, when the adversaries lead them.

Though tenace at Whist cannot be reduced to a certainty as at piquet, still no one can become a Whist-player who does not thoroughly comprehend it; the principle is simple, but the combinations are various. Every one knows that ace, queen, form tenace; and beginners usually wait to finesse their queens, right or wrong, but omit to do so with other cards, and seem to forget that tenace may be established by any combination of cards, and is as available with a five and seven against the four and six, as with ace and queen against king, knave. Tenace is insured by being played up to, or becoming last player.

Example:—A, the leader, has four cards left; viz., the second and fourth trump, and the ace and the five of clubs. B, the left-hand adversary, has the first and third trump, and the king and the six of clubs. The ace of clubs being led by A, the king should be put down to it by B. A will then probably lead trumps; if so, B inevitably makes three tricks; by keeping the king of clubs he cannot possibly make more than two.

A has king, queen, ten of a suit, B ace, knave, and another. A leading the king, if B wins it with the

ace he makes but one trick; by giving the king and thus preserving the tenace, he makes two.

Having ace, knave, ten, of a partner's *forced* lead, or of the last cards, play the ten; this will, probably, gain two tricks upon the suit being returned.

Tenace is more easily kept against the right-hand than against the left-hand adversary; the latter, in fact, requires great skill.

The state of the scores is the sole criterion by which to decide upon the propriety or impropriety of a finesse, or of giving one trick for the chance of making two, by preserving the tenace; at the score of three against one point it is highly proper to run some risk to make two by cards in order to win the game; as the loss of the odd trick, by so doing, would be of little moment. Suppose, then, A, with six tricks turned and three cards left in his hand, viz., a losing trump, and tenace of another suit likely to be trumped by one of the adversaries, should play the losing trump as if the trumps are not divided, and his tenace successful, he cannot make two tricks.

At the score of two-love, A has four cards left, viz., two losing trumps and two thirteenth cards, with six tricks turned, there being two superior trumps against him. He is to lead a trump for the chance of two trumps being divided, as, if so, he makes three

tricks and the game; at any other score he should secure the odd trick by forcing the adversary.

The following stroke at Whist (which, considering that cards are unseen, and their positions only presumed, equals a masterly move at chess,) is recorded as showing what first-rate play can do. The score was four all. A, with *six tricks turned*, remained with ten, seven of trumps and two hearts, and led a heart. B, the left-hand adversary, had knave and eight of trumps and two clubs. C, A's partner, had two small trumps and two hearts. D, the last-player, had the king and a small trump, a club, and a diamond. D, seeing it was necessary to win every trick, and that there was no chance of doing so unless his partner had either the two best trumps or a successful finesse in them, trumped A's lead of hearts with the best trump, the king; returned the small one, and thereby won a most critical game.

In order to establish a long suit with four trumps only, under-play is requisite. A has ace, four trumps, tierce major, six hearts, king, and another club, and one good diamond; he should lead a trump, and if his partner wins and returns it, keep up the ace. When A or his partner get the lead again, they of course play trump, which leaves him with the lead and one trump, not, however, the best, if they were unequally

divided. His strong suit forces out his best trump, but is again established by his small one; had A, on the contrary, put on the ace, he would have been forced, and his strong suit rendered unavailable. With a similar hand, having ace, king, and two small trumps, if the adversaries lead trumps, give them the first trick, although last player; nothing but five or six trumps in one hand can thus prevent the long suit being established.

With ace, queen, and two small trumps, if the knave is led on the left, do not win it, upon the same principle.

Every one with ace, king, knave of a suit, if the queen is turned on the right, will lead the king, and wait; the same principle attaches to the whole of the cards. If, therefore, you have ace, queen, ten, and the knave is turned up, lead the queen.

Having six trumps originally, it often happens that you have three or four trumps left, and that the best is with your adversaries; if so, play one, as that best trump may stop your partner's or your suit; besides, either you or your partner become last player, and gain the tenace in any other suit that is led. This also demonstrates that it is impolitic to play out the best trump, when several others are against you.

If A remains with the best trump (the knave) and

one small trump, and nothing but losing cards, his partner, B, having the second best trump, the ten and winning cards, with one other trump in the adversaries' hands, A, when forced, should trump with the knave, and lead the small one, in order to give his partner the lead to make his winning cards.

There is much difference of opinion, even among good players, as to the advantage of leading single cards; the state of the scores, and the chance of winning or saving the game, ought to be the guide in this as in all other leads. Having before remarked upon this point, it is necessary only to add here, that with the tenace, or probability of it in other suits, it is then better to lead the single card, although weak in trumps.

The player who can recollect the cards played with exactness has a decided advantage. Few, however, do so. Those who cannot arrive at such perfection must, in order to play Whist at all, remember, at least, the trumps, and the best cards of his own suits: in order to accomplish this, every one should contrive a system of Whist mnemonics for themselves, as most likely to become habitual, or learn one suggested by another. Some recommend sorting the hands in a particular manner, and altering the position of the cards as the suits are played; this method

fails at a pinch, namely, when you have no more of a suit left, and are, consequently, called upon to trump or not.

The greatest assistance to memory is the habit of counting your hand by suits as you take it up. When at a loss you can then revert to the original number dealt to you of each suit, and thereby at least make out the number of rounds.

The two terms, tenace and finesse, although universally used at Whist, are not so generally understood; a definition of them is therefore necessary. Tenace is having the cards in a position to gain the most tricks; and finesse is the art of attaining that position.

Both are thus exemplified:—A leads the ten of a suit; B, his partner, having ace, knave, and a small one, passes or *finesses* ten, although he knows the king to be on his left, in order to have the tenace with his ace, knave, when the suit is returned, and to ensure two tricks in it; if he puts on his ace, he can make but one. The same principle attaches to the whole cards; and memory and observation are requisite to apply it to the low cards when the high are out.

Having said as much as will smooth the way for the beginner, and induce him to think and observe,

without which it is impossible to play Whist, I take my leave, merely adding, that it is absurd (unless determined never to play) not to endeavour to arrive at some skill in an amusement so universally prevalent, and in which the calls of society frequently require us to join. Even in the family circle it is useful; age often feels complacent towards youth for affording an hour's innocent amusement, particularly if willingness and some skill are shown; and both in town and country, to make up the rubber, is well known to be a qualification.

Wishing all Whist-players good cards, and, above all, good humour, I here make my bow to the critics.

THE END.

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